

THE JOURNAL

December 26, 2003

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Sports Gauchos take consolation in tournament comeback in Arizona [C1]

Arts Dancing is a must with duo's Celtic sounds [C10]


NEW RESIDENTS Eric Liu, Jerry Oliveras, and Hong Yu comb through debris during the coastal cleanup at Albany on Saturday, Sept. 20.

Tree panel criticizes city official

 By Alan Lopez
STAFF WRITER

EL CERRITO — Mayor Pro Tem Sandi Potter's report that some residents favor a Tiburon-style view-preservation ordinance has sparked criticism from tree advocates, who say Potter tainted the group's discussion.

Potter, acting as a liaison from the City Council to the tree commission, had no right to intervene, said Rosemary Loubal.

Neither Potter nor "any other liaison has (any) business interjecting herself into the process of the commission," said Loubal, the park and recreation commission chairwoman. "They're supposed to be a conduit. It's very unfortunate and destroys the very function of city commissions. It makes a mockery of the democratic process, having someone from council, say 'Here's what we think.'"

The Dec. 18 tree commission meeting was the third focusing on providing recommendations to the council about what a new view-preservation ordinance should look like.

Both the current El Cerrito and Tiburon ordinances say residents have the right to "a view" when they buy their home.

But advocates for tree preservation stand firmly against such an ordinance. If there must be a new rule, they are calling for one modeled after Berkeley's — in which the benefits of trees are weighed more heavily than in the Tiburon ordinance. There is an implied right to a view in the Berkeley ordinance, but it's not as clear-cut, said city attorney Janet Coleson.

The tree commission's discussion had been more moderate, designed to accommodate more residents, Loubal said, until Potter spoke up.

"We're all sort of in shock by how the whole thing was undermined by one individual," said Ann Thrupp, the coordinator for the Friends of El Cerrito Trees, of which Loubal is a member.

Historically, council liaisons to city commissions attend meetings and answer questions as appropriate. They are not supposed to be an influential part of decision-making, said city clerk Linda Giddings.

See TREES, Page A7

Mother held in beating of 3-year-old

■ Child abused over fear of jumping off play structure, police report

 By Karl Fischer
STAFF WRITER

EL CERRITO — Police say the mother of a 3-year-old girl severely beat the child because she was afraid to jump from a wooden play structure at Cerrito Vista Park like other children.

The Contra Costa District Attorney's Office charged 29-year-old Zhihui Zhang last week on suspicion of child abuse and inflicting corporal injury on a child. Her husband, 33-year-old Yu Chan, faces charges of child abuse, said deputy district attorney Dara Cashman.

An Albany day care provider called police on Dec. 15 to report serious bruising on the face and body of the child, El Cerrito detective Sgt. Shawn Maples said. Police did not release the girl's name.

The girl and her 1-year-old sister recently immigrated from China, police learned from the day care. Her parents were in America for a short time before sending for the children.

"One thing the day care provider told the officers was that the mother was frustrated because (the 3-year-old) was not learning English fast enough," Cashman said. "The girl had only been in the country a few weeks. And she is only 3."

County Child Protective Services officials took the girl immediately and detectives interviewed Zhang later in the day, Maples said. She admitted to beating the child with a wooden spoon for 20 minutes to 45 minutes the night before because of an incident that embarrassed her at the park, according to a police report.

Zhang told police she and her family went to

See CHILD, Page A7

Looking back at 2003

 By Alan Lopez
STAFF WRITER

Elementary physics — sort of — any action, there's a reaction. That was true in local cities in 2003. El Cerrito, August brought a terrorist crash on Moers Lane that killed people and set a woman's car on fire. It also brought out the city of local residents and public organizations.

Residents also debated a new preservation ordinance. The city been busy trying to take that in-draft a new ordinance that can approve. Albany, residents have criticized for not maintaining the landscaping. But the city is working on a plan that will designate tax money for landscaping upkeep.

The Albany Community Foundation, a nonprofit organization headed by councilmembers Allan Maris and El Okawachi, is working on a landscaping project on Key Route 26.

Kensington, residents are giving Contra Costa County Supervisor Gioia no shortage of issues to worry about. The latest is the bus running on the 67 line that many feel will change for city streets. Others are worried that any tinkering with the route will result in the loss of needed public transportation.

There's a look at other news and events from 2003:

January
■ A Contra Costa City Council decision upholds a City Council decision preventing a developer from creating a 14-home subdivision at 2600 Avenue and Madera Circle.

■ Leigh Marymor, the vice president of the Bay Area Rock Art Association, begins an effort to preserve a rock art boulder at Canyon Trail with the help of the Friends of El Cerrito.

■ El Cerrito begins a three-month study on collecting delinquent business license fees.

■ Kensington holds a town hall meeting to discuss a county ordinance that would limit house additions and alterations.

■ El Cerrito holds its annual Martin Luther King Jr. Parade and Rally. The El Cerrito Council approves

the city's housing element, a document that guides how much and what kind of housing should be built in the city. Council members Letitia Moore and Janet Abelson also criticize potential changes to the AC Transit 67 bus route.

■ The Albany council gives an entertainment permit to Cafe Eclectica, a teen cafe and concert venue, despite complaints about noise there. The complaints help to shut down the concerts at Cafe Eclectica later in the year. The council also agrees to repaint the city's community center a slightly different color. The repainting occurs in February.

■ Norton Buffalo and Elvin Bishop headline a concert benefiting the Albany School District music program.

February

■ Albany holds a memorial service honoring Dario Meniketti, a former Albany Citizen of the Year who died in December. Friends, family and city officials attend and trade anecdotes about Meniketti, who was deeply involved in city affairs for decades.

■ The El Cerrito council passes a resolution stating its opposition to the U.S. invasion of Iraq. It also votes to decrease the amount of office space required at the mixed-use Mill and Lumber Project, at the developer's request. At the time, developer John

Baer and his partners said construction of the project would begin soon. It fails to break ground by the end of the year.

March

■ Albany teen cafe closes its doors after loud concerts prompt complaints from neighbors. Owner Carol Sly says the cost to soundproof the building leads to the decision to shut it down.

■ El Cerrito council holds a goal-setting session. Continuing to redevelop San Pablo Avenue, building a new civic center and increasing communication with city staff are among the members' top priorities. The council also passes a resolution censuring the Patriot Act. Council members and residents say the terrorism-fighting act violates constitutional rights.

■ KGO-TV Channel 7 news holds a brainstorming session at the El Cerrito community center, asking residents what El Cerrito news they would like to see televised. Fifty people attend.

■ People protest the impending Iraq war. A candlelight vigil drawing several hundred people is held at Memorial Park in Albany. Hundreds of students walk out of El Cerrito and Albany high schools.

■ The Albany council allocates \$500,000 for city street repair. The

money is derived from the Measure F bond measure. Repairs happen in the summer.

■ The Friends of El Cerrito Trees organizes tree-planting events. A total of 65 trees are planted on Richmond Street, in Tassajara Park and on Barrett Avenue.

April

■ The El Cerrito City Council chooses the corner of Manila and San Pablo avenues as the site of a new City Hall building. No other action since then is taken to get the project built. The council also approves efforts to preserve a boulder etched with ancient American Indian carvings at Canyon Trail Park.

■ About 120 people attend a second public workshop to provide ideas about what they want to see along the Albany waterfront. The ideas differ from what Magna Entertainment, the owner of Golden Gate Fields proposes.

■ The Albany City Council approves a resolution supporting a repeal of the USA Patriot Act. The Albany Library Advisory Board asks the council to pass the resolution because of concerns that the act gives the FBI powers to examine what materials people borrow from libraries, without needing probable cause or permitting patrons to be informed.

■ The El Cerrito Art Association holds its 27th Annual Art Show.

May

■ A public workshop is held to get ideas for what should be done with a piece of derelict land on El Cerrito's northern border. The city and creek aim to turn the parcel into a park and trail.

■ Albany Middle School receives a California Distinguished Schools Award. It comes as welcome news for district dealing with budget problems.

■ The owners of the Parkway Speakeasy Theater in Oakland sign an agreement with the El Cerrito Redevelopment Agency saying they will operate the Cerrito Theater for 25 years. The agreement says Speakeasy Theaters will pay the city \$10,000 a month in rent.

■ The El Cerrito Council decides

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SHERRY LEWIS/STAFF

A FIREFIGHTER PULLS a hose in front of a burning El Cerrito home Aug. 26. Fire on the A truck traveling west on Moers lost control and crashed into the home.

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INFORMATION FOR LIFE

NEWS BRIEFS

Albany

Seniors may be exempt from parcel tax

Seniors 65 and older, or those who will turn 65 before July 1, may qualify for an exemption from the Albany Schools 1999 Parcel Tax Measure A.

Residents can find an application for exemption at the Albany Unified School District, 904 Talbot Ave.

An exemption form must be completed and on file for it to be processed. To have a form mailed to you, call Darlene Mock at 510-558-3766.

Seniors who have already received the exemption do not need to reapply.

The deadline for applications to be returned to the Albany school district administrative office is May 1.

Albany seeks many volunteers

The city needs volunteers for both long-term assignments and special events in a variety of city departments; at City Hall, at the Senior Center, at the Police Department, and more.

For details, contact Ely Hwang, volunteer coordinator, at 510-559-7225 or ehwang@albanyca.org.

El Cerrito

Page Turners schedule January meeting

El Cerrito High School's book group, Page Turners, will meet on Wednesday, Jan. 14 at 7 p.m. in Room 604 to discuss "The Mistress of Spices," by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. The 3-year-old group welcomes parents, students, teachers and siblings. The meetings are open to anyone in the El Cerrito school community.

For details call Paula Gocker or Joan Cone at 510-524-9560.

West County

Emergency medical care committee seat

Supervisor John Gioia is seeking a qualified, motivated candidate to fill a District 1 alternate seat on the Contra Costa County Emergency Medical Care Committee. The volunteer committee reviews and advises the Board of Supervisors on the delivery of emergency medical care in the county, including ambulance services, emergency medical care and first aid practices. The committee meets four times annually, or more as needed. Terms are two years.

Candidates should have some interest or background in emergency medical care, but need not be professionals in the field. Anyone interested in applying should contact Art Lathrop, Director of Emergency Medical Services, at 925-646-4690; or Kate Rauch, District Coordinator, at 510-374-3231.

Alameda County

Hall of fame seeks extraordinary women

The search is on for 10 extraordinary women who will be inducted into the Alameda County Women's Hall of Fame in March 2004.

Hall of Fame organizers kicked off the 11th annual search for entrants with a presentation before the Board of Supervisors, which passed a proclamation pledging continued support for the effort. Nomination forms are being distributed and must be submitted by Friday, Jan. 9.

Women of all ages, including youth, may be nominated in the categories of business, community service, art, education, environmental preservation, health, justice, science, sports and youth. Nominees should be established in their respective careers or volunteer positions, with significant achievements that have benefited the community.

Nominations forms may be picked up at the County's Administration Office, at 1221 Oak Street, 5th floor, Suite 555 or sent to anyone who calls the Alameda County Commission on the Status of Women at 510-259-3871.

Student ecology club offers baby-sitting

A group of environmentally concerned high school students in a youth club called Green Justice are holding this community baby-sitting night on New Year's Eve as a fund-raiser for a spring trip to Costa Rica this spring to save endangered leatherback sea turtles and exchange culture with Costa Rican teenagers.

The event will be held from 8 p.m. to 3 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 31, at the Arlington Community Church, 52 Arlington Ave. The cost is \$50 per child or \$75 for two children.

The children will eat a pizza dinner and healthy snacks; watch kid-appropriate movies, play group games with teenagers; and do arts and crafts projects. There will be teen-age baby-sitters and adult supervisors present at all times.

For details, call Rebecca Pfeifer-Rosenblum at 510-417-5851 or email Alex Pfeifer-Rosenblum at flyingpenguin711@aol.com.

Poetry event to feature Ivan Arguelles

The Albany Library is featuring poetry events the first Thursday and second Wednesday of the month. The first Thursdays include an open mike and featured poet. The next event is Thursday, Jan. 8, from 7 to 9 p.m. and it features poet Ivan Arguelles.

Arguelles is the author of numerous poetry books and chapbooks, including "The Invention of Spain" and "Looking for Mary Lou," which won the 1989 William Carlos Williams award. His most recent works are TriLoka and the novella Orientalia. He is the co-founder and editor of Pantograph Press.

The second Wednesday is a drop-in poetry writing workshop led by Alison Seevak. The next event is Jan. 14, from 7 to 9 p.m.

Both events are free and ongoing. Light refreshments will be served.

The Albany Library is located at 1247 Marin Ave. For details, call Julie Winkelstein at 510-526-3720, ext. 20.

ALBANY POLICE

Monday, Dec. 15

■ **HARASSMENT** — At about 8:30 p.m. officers responded to the 900 block of San Pablo Avenue on reports of a subject being harassed by a man with a restraining order against him. Officers arrested a 39-year-old transient man for making threats and violating a restraining order. He was cited and transported to the Berkeley Jail.

Tuesday, Dec. 16

■ **BREAK-IN** — Thieves broke into a tool shed on the 800 block of Solano Avenue during the night.

■ **BIKE RECOVERED** — During the afternoon thieves stole a bike from a shed on the 1300 block of Dartmouth Street. At about 3 p.m. on Dec. 19 recognized the bike near Marin and Tulare Streets. The owner identified the bike and officers arrested the 14-year-old Berkeley boy who was riding the bike.

Wednesday, Dec. 17

■ **DUI & SUSPENDED LICENSE** — At about 7 a.m. officers stopped a '92 Ford Mustang near Washington and San Pablo Avenues for a vehicle code violation. They arrested the driver, a 35-year-old Pinole man for an outstanding warrant for DUI and driving with a suspended license. He was cited and transported to the Berkeley Jail.

■ **AUTO BREAK-IN** — During the night unknown thieves broke into a black '91 Toyota Corolla parked on the 900 block of Stannage Avenue.

■ **UNUSUAL FIND** — A resident on the 1500 block of Francis Street reported finding dentures and ladies underwear in her yard.

Thursday, Dec. 18

■ **POSSESSION CHARGES** — At about 3:15 a.m. officers stopped a silver '86 Buick on the 1100 block of San Pablo Avenue for having no license plates. The driver, an 18-year-old San Francisco woman, was found to be in possession of a controlled substance. She was arrested, cited and released with a notice to appear.

■ **CAR STOLEN** — During the night thieves stole a blue '87 Honda Civic

parked on the 900 block of Cerrito Street. There were no witnesses.

■ **GIFTS STOLEN** — Thieves broke out the windows of a gray '97 Toyota van parked on the 900 block of Taylor Street and stole gifts from inside. There were no witnesses.

■ **NO BAIL WARRANT** — At about 9:30 a.m. officers stopped a gold '87 Ford pickup near San Pablo Avenue and Harrison Street for a vehicle code violation. The driver, a 53-year-old Richmond man, was found to have outstanding warrants from Alameda County and a no bail warrant from Contra Costa County. He was arrested and transported to the Berkeley Jail.

■ **SUSPENDED LICENSE** — Officers arrested a 43-year-old El Cerrito man driving a maroon Chevrolet near Washington and San Pablo avenues for driving with a suspended license. He was cited and released with a notice to appear.

■ **MARIJUANA POSSESSION** — At about noon officers responded to Ocean View School on the 1000 block of Jackson Street on reports that a student was being detained for possession of marijuana. Officers arrested the 13-year-old Albany boy for drug possession. He was released to his father with a notice to appear.

Friday, Dec. 19

■ **OUTSTANDING WARRANT** — At about 2 a.m. officers checked out a blue '85 Saab parked in the north lot of Golden Gate Fields. They arrested the occupant, a 26-year-old San Pablo man for an outstanding warrant for battery. He was cited and released with a notice to appear.

■ **DOUBLE JEOPARDY** — Officers stopped a silver '88 Buick near Taft Street for a vehicle code violation. They released the driver, a 32-year-old Richmond man, with a warning. About an hour later they contacted the same car and driver near Cerrito and Hillside streets and arrested him for driving without a license and resisting an officer. He was released with a notice to appear.

■ **AUTO BREAK-IN** — During the night thieves broke into a black Volkswagen and stole items from inside. There were no witnesses.

■ **TWO ARRESTS** — At about 10:30 p.m. officers arrested a 21-year-old Oakland man near University Avenue

and Second Street for DUI. He was cited and released with a notice to appear. The passenger, a 22-year-old Oakland man, was found to be in possession of a controlled substance and on parole. He was arrested and transported to Berkeley Jail.

Saturday, Dec. 20

■ **DUI** — At about 1:30 a.m. officers stopped a blue '93 Ford van on the 1600 block of Solano Avenue for erratic driving. The driver, a 26-year-old Oakland man, was found to be intoxicated. He was arrested for DUI, cited and released with a notice to appear. The van was towed.

■ **DUI** — At about 2 a.m. officers arrested a 26-year-old Albany man, driving a black '91 Nissan Maxima near Santa Fe and Marin avenues, for DUI. He was cited and released with a notice to appear.

■ **CAR FOUND** — Officers located a silver '88 Honda Accord on the 700 block of Pierce Street that had been stolen out of Napa. The owner was notified and the car towed.

■ **CAR STOLEN** — During the night thieves stole a blue Honda Accord parked at 555 Pierce St. There were no witnesses.

■ **SUSPENDED LICENSE** — Officers stopped a 63-year-old Richmond man near Pierce and Central streets because he was known to have an outstanding warrant for driving with a suspended license in the amount of \$658. He was arrested and additionally charged because his license was still suspended. He was cited and released with a notice to appear.

■ **AUTO BREAK-IN** — During the night thieves broke into a red '93 Honda Civic parked on the 1500 block of Marin Avenue. There were no witnesses.

■ **CAR STOLEN** — Thieves stole a white Toyota Corolla belonging to a San Francisco man that was parked at Golden Gate Fields.

■ **DUI** — At about 10 p.m. officers arrested a 26-year-old Maine man near San Pablo Avenue and Buchanan Street for DUI. He was cited and released with a Notice to Appear.

Sunday, Dec. 21

■ **DUI** — At about 12:30 a.m. officers arrested a 40-year-old Richmond man

EL CERRITO POLICE

Wednesday, Dec. 10

■ **BURGLARY** — A home on the 7600 block of Stockton Avenue was entered between 10 p.m. on Dec. 10 and 8 a.m. the next day; \$150 in cash was taken.

Thursday, Dec. 11

■ **BURGLARY** — Cash, jewelry and a laptop computer were taken from the 500 block of Village Drive between 8 a.m. and 7:50 p.m. The home was entered by removing a window screen and rear bedroom window.

■ **VEHICLE THEFT** — A four-door 1986 Honda Accord was stolen from El Cerrito Plaza on Dec. 11. It was found at 1:30 a.m. the next morning with its radio missing.

■ **VEHICLE THEFT** — A 1999 Honda Accord was taken from the 1700 block of Arlington Boulevard between 8:30 p.m. on Dec. 11 and 5 p.m. on Dec. 12.

Friday, Dec. 12

■ **VEHICLE THEFT** — A black 1986 Honda CRX was taken from the 6600 block of Central Avenue between 2 and 10 p.m. on Dec. 12.

■ **BURGLARY** — Custom-made costume jewelry and a generator were taken from a locked garage on the 8100 block of Terrace Drive between midnight and 5 a.m.

■ **VEHICLE BURGLARY** — Stereo equipment and 400 compact discs were taken from a vehicle at Colusa and Susan avenues between noon and 2 p.m.

■ **VEHICLE BURGLARY** — Ninety compact discs were taken from an unlocked vehicle on the 400 block of Lexington Avenue between 7 p.m. on Dec. 12 and 11:30 a.m. the next day.

Saturday, Dec. 13

■ **VEHICLE BURGLARY** — Clothing, checks and an Alpine speaker box were taken from a vehicle on the 700 block of Hancock Way between 11 p.m. on Dec. 13 and 8 a.m. the next day.

■ **VEHICLE THEFT** — A silver 1989 Honda Prelude was taken from the 3300 block of Belmont Avenue between 8:30 p.m. on Dec. 13 and 1:30 a.m. the next morning.

Sunday, Dec. 14

■ **VEHICLE BURGLARY** — Christmas gifts, a briefcase and a woman's coat were taken from an unlocked vehicle on

the 8000 block of Terrace Drive, between 2 and 8 a.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 16

■ **BANK ROBBERY** — Citibank was robbed by a man who passed a note to the teller at 2:10 p.m. The man was about 25 to 35 years old, wearing a baseball cap and dark gray or black sweater. The suspect was last seen headed on foot into El Cerrito Plaza.

Wednesday, Dec. 17

■ **ATTEMPTED BREAK-IN** — Four or five men were seen attempting to enter a home on the 7000 block of Tamalpais Court. They knocked at the front door and then went to the rear of the home and attempted to enter through a sliding glass door. They were frightened off when the home alarm activated.

■ **BREAKING AND ENTERING** — The owner of a home on the 2500 block of Tamalpais Drive reported that their home had been entered between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. The home was entered by breaking a rear window.

■ **VEHICLE RECOVERY** — A stolen 1990 Honda Civic was recovered on South 57th Street at Madison Avenue at

in a red Chevrolet Gilman streets and released with a

■ **DUI AND SUSPENDED LICENSE** — At about 1:30 a.m. officers stopped a black '91 San Pablo Avenue for a vehicle code violation. The driver, a 26-year-old woman, for DUI and suspended license and released with a

■ **DOUBLE ARREST** — Officers stopped a silver '91 Honda Accord about 2:15 a.m. on San Pablo Avenue and Harrison Street. The arrested man for DUI and license and for a

■ **VANDALISM** — Unknown subjects broke into a 1998 Honda Accord parked at 1100 block of Pierce Street and released with a

■ **BREAK-IN** — Unknown subjects broke into an apartment block of Cornell Avenue and released with a

■ **DUI** — Officers stopped a 1990 Arizona man driving a Chevrolet on the 8000 block of Terrace Drive for DUI. He was transported to Santa Fe

■ **AUTO BREAK-IN** — At 10:30 p.m. an El Cerrito man reported that he saw while it was parked on

of Cleveland Avenue witnesses.

Weekly Summary

During the week of Dec. 15, officers towed two cars, 17 false alarms, arrested or deceased animals, people who were locked out of their homes, and reported a burglary, domestic arena offenses, civil disturbances and arrests. Officers stopped persons issuing false warnings, Albany High School students, and 12 medical emergencies.

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EDITORIAL

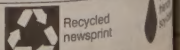
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Neighbors

Dedicated educator leads unique school

Gregor Alternative High is a very few rooms on what is now Ocean Elementary School. A small school with very big students who, for one reason or another, cannot make it in a regular high school.

They send kids to this because of lack of credit. Barry Shapiro, McGregor's principal. "There are reasons: some are truancy, some are behavior problems. They just don't go to class, because they have conflicts with other kids from the fifth grade on. Many of the other social problems at home. And some are those who are just not motivated, and don't fit in at a high school."

The school starts with the fifth grade. By the end of the fifth grade, teachers can usually tell what students are not going to attend, are truant, or have alcohol or drug problems.

"There are many more of our students," Shapiro notes, "are very interested in computers. Some of them where they can't do anything else. They are often in that category where they say, and he can't figure out why."

There are very few behavior problems," Shapiro reports. "Although these kids of behavior problems in high school. But we are a small campus with only one of which is an art room and one is the kitchen. We share with the after school classes." There is one teacher, he says, one teacher there 60 percent of the time, and the principal, Shapiro, handles senior economics and government classes.

Transitions

the way we handle entrance to the school," he says. When a student is referred to or asks to go to the school, Shapiro talks with the parents, and with the student, asking "Why do you want to be referred?" He gets them to focus on their problems.

Shapiro talks about the school and shows them around, gives them the rules, and which is the cardinal rule: you have 5, 6 or 7 days in a six-week period, or a few days, you are going to be in credits. They have six- to eight-unit terms.

The story demonstrates



CLARA-RAE GENSER
Community Folk

Shapiro's style and dedication.

There was one very good teacher who taught here for a year and then was transferred to another school. "I begged and pleaded to get her back," he says, "I almost got down on my knees. And finally I did." This teacher loves to cook, and suddenly there was an art/cooking class. Everyone wants to be in it, and everyone loves it. "It is something to see a big footballer daintily rolling sushi," Shapiro says, laughing.

The food they make is shared with the entire school, and every Friday, they feast.

Plus, of course, it helps with many subjects such as reading, math, etc.

Fond farewells

He talks of the graduation ceremonies, where each student is introduced by a teacher,

and each of them gets to speak. It is a very happy ceremony. At one time they served dinner to all attendees, but they cannot do that now. "Family and friends show up in droves," Shapiro taught at the school for nine years. As the only full-time teacher, he also ran the school. Although having no administrative credentials, he thought, "I think I am going to run for principal in self-defense." The superintendent was very supportive, and Shapiro went to school, himself, and is earning the credentials. "I love the school and I love working with the kids," he beams, "I'm happy when I go to work daily. It's new and changing every day."

Related Introduction

From Southern California, Barry Shapiro won a full NDEA Scholarship, and earned a Masters in Languages at USC.

He taught in San Francisco schools for a couple of years, during which he got interested in photography. He did a book with an author, and "Hand Made Houses" turned out to be a best seller. He quit teaching

for photography for 20 years, during which time he married and had two daughters. Sadly, his wife died. Years later, married again, he felt burned out and decided to go back to teaching. Applying to Albany, he started as substitute, then was recruited to McGregor by Connie Hubbard, now superintendent of Piedmont Schools. He has been principal of McGregor for a year.

An ebullient, dedicated person, Shapiro spoke happily of the many successes his former students have had and are having, as well as of his own two daughters and two grandchildren. The melding of this fine principal and this very special school seems to be a perfect match, and a recipe for success.

Do you know people, places or groups in El Cerrito, Albany or Kensington that would make good subjects for this column? If so, write me at 555 Pierce St., No. 443, Albany, CA 94706 or call 510-525-4585. My e-mail is crgenser@aol.com.

Jazzy parrot, Newt Lady made past year notable

WHAT A DIFFERENCE a year makes. Just ask Gray Davis or Saddam Hussein.

Who could have predicted the cockamamie events of the past 12 months? All we can say for sure about 2004 is that there are some surprises in store for us. The optimist in me hopes they're pleasant ones. The realist in me fears they'll be nasty. Whichever, let's try to get through them without tearing each other apart, OK?

I know, I know, I'm starting to sound like a broken record. Country Joe McDonald was teasing me about it the other day, saying, "You're starting to sound like Rodney King, always asking, 'Can't we all get along?'" I replied, "If I am, it was listening to your songs that made me this way."

Country Joe was one of the people who brightened the local scene in 2003. As an icon of the anti-war movement and a Navy veteran, he was perfectly positioned to spearhead the Berkeley Veterans Day observance that went a long way toward healing some still-fester-ing wounds from the '60s.

Another was Annabelle Travis, the Newt Lady of El Sobrante. Every morning and every evening during the rainy season, she and her neighbors save hundreds of the little critters from being flattened by automobiles by carrying them across busy Hillside Drive to their ancestral spawning ponds in nearby Castro Ranch Creek.

And happy New Year to Kenny De Martini, Rich Smith, Guy Davis, Bob Donalaya and all of the other cheery folks at the Mel-O-Dee Lounge at El Cerrito Plaza, who chipped in to buy a motorized wheelchair for their buddy Red Holski, a retired school custodian who lost both legs to amputation because of chronic circulatory problems.

And here's to 9-year-old Jonathan Burnoski, the pride of the Berkeley Lawn Bowling Club, who is winning tournaments in a sport where most players don't even start to reach their peak until they turn 50. And Jon Ely, the Albany city councilman who doubles as umpire, groundskeeper and janitor at Little League games. And Doras Briggs, the 85-year-old railroad buff who meets the trains every day at the Emeryville Amtrak station and helps the passengers with any problems.

Welcome home to Marine Lance Cpl. Maurice Delmer of Berkeley and Army Spc. Jay Taylor of El Cerrito, who are back from Iraq, to the infinite relief of their moms. And kudos to Marci Jordan of the



MARTIN SNAPP
Snapp Shots

A special hello to Jewel Bleckinger, owner of Bleckinger's Pro Tennis Shop in El Cerrito, who has a second career as a recognized authority on African-American spirituals.

Berkeley Food and Housing Project, who is trying to make life a little less grim for homeless people. Ditto for Lisa Fine of the Berkeley-East Bay Humane Society, who is doing the same for homeless dogs and cats.

And a special hello to Jewel Bleckinger, owner of Bleckinger's Pro Tennis Shop in El Cerrito, who has a second career as a recognized authority on African-American spirituals. ("When I'm not singing, I'm stringin'.") She was the most fascinating interview I had all year. I sat there enthralled as she deconstructed those spirituals and showed me how they were actually coded instructions to slaves about how to escape.

But my favorite stories were about three animals. The first is my neighbor, Zeppelin the parrot, who entertains me every night with the duets he performs with my other neighbor, jazz musician Tom Glass.

The other two are Gideon and Tumbleweed Tommy, the miniature donkeys at Children's Fairland in Oakland. Gideon and Tommy would never have gotten together without the generosity of you readers, who came up with the funds to buy Tommy as a companion for Gideon, who was heartbroken after his longtime buddy Lampwick suddenly died.

So, in the last analysis, it's you I have to thank for making 2003 such a special one for me. Here's hoping we have just as much fun next year.

Reach Martin Snapp at 510-262-2787 or e-mail msnapp@cctimes.com.



MARK DUFRERE/STAFF

Trolley returns to Solano for a day

A SAN FRANCISCO cable car-style shuttle bus carries last-minute Christmas shoppers along Solano Avenue in Albany on Wednesday. The free shuttle was provided by the Albany Chamber of Commerce.

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FRI, DEC 26 & SUN, DEC 28: Elvis Presley and Ann Margret star in VIVA LAS VEGAS, certainly one of the King's all-time best movies! He plays a hunky racecar driver and she's a sultry Vegas showgirl, and when these two get together—watch out! FRI DEC 26 at 7:00 & 9:15; SUN, DEC 28 at 7:15 only!

SAT, DEC 27 & SUN, DEC 28: The exquisitely atmospheric 1955 French gangster classic, BOB THE GAMBLER, is a favorite of film buffs the world over! Directed by the legendary Jean-Pierre Melville, this black & white jewel will leave you speechless. SAT DEC 27 at 7:00 & 9:15; SUN, DEC 28 at 5:00 only!

FRI, JAN 2 & SUN, JAN 4: From the classic novel by H. G. Wells comes one of the best, most visually dazzling science fiction films of the 1950's—WAR OF THE WORLDS. A Martian invasion threatens to bring the Earth's population to its knees. How will these marauding aliens be stopped? FRI, JAN 2 at 7:00 & 9:00; SUN, JAN 4 at 7:15 only!

SAT, JAN 3 & SUN, JAN 4: THE WIZARD OF OZ. The story of Dorothy, a young girl from Kansas who's suddenly dropped down into the magical land of Oz will enthrall and enchant you no matter how many times you've seen it. Starring the incomparable Judy Garland. SAT, JAN 3 at 7:00 & 9:15; SUN, JAN 4 at 5:00 only!

ALSO COMING IN JANUARY... Frank Capra's comedy classic IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT (Jan 9 & 11), David Lean's romantic masterpiece, BRIDE OF THE WARRIORS (Jan 10 & 11), Hitchcock's suspense thriller STRANGERS ON A TRAIN (Jan 16 & 18) and Francois Truffaut's wonderful DAY FOR NIGHT (Jan 17 & 18).

Admission prices are \$7.00 general and \$5 for children and senior citizens. Separate admission for each Sunday show. Located on the old Alameda Naval Air Station. Additional information available at www.auctionsbythebay.com or 510-835-6187.

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THE JOURNAL

... were it left to me to decide whether we should
a government without newspapers, or newspapers
without a government, I should not hesitate to
to prefer the latter."

— Thomas Jefferson

EDITORIAL

El Cerrito joins county,
has opportunity to lead

IN VOTING to become the 12th city in Contra Costa to endorse the principles of a countywide planning document known as Shaping Our Future, El Cerrito has joined an ambitious plan to direct the area's growth.

Before the City Council's unanimous vote Dec. 15, though, there was discussion, and councilmembers raised good questions, questions that need to be kept in mind even as the city continues to participate in this ambitious effort.

El Cerrito has little in common with cities in central and east Contra Costa County, as Councilwoman Gina Brusatori said. She made the valid point that it would make more sense for El Cerrito to be part of a plan for unifying cities along Interstate 80.

But Mayor Letitia Moore made a good point in saying that El Cerrito should participate in the process of Shaping Our Future lest it be left out.

Shaping Our Future is a \$750,000, five-year initiative that calls for the county and its 19 cities to voluntarily redirect growth from the sprawling suburban fringe into more compact, mixed developments in existing cities near transit.

The plan was funded by cities and the county in an effort to explore ways of cooperatively managing the coming growth. Depending on how one looks at it, it is either a visionary masterwork that will get people out of their cars and transform the county into a much more livable place — or it is social engineering devised to take away local control and raise taxes.

But to argue these two extremes is to miss the main point, which is that growth cannot continue unchecked and unplanned throughout the region. So far, Shaping Our Future is the way into an important discussion. And there is much about Shaping Our Future — and growth in general — that needs to be discussed.

Whether Shaping Our Future is the correct way to plan growth remains to be seen. But discussion and consideration of options must go on if this area is to be livable in the coming years.

Mayor Moore is right in saying that El Cerrito needs to stay in the process. It must, but not just so it is not left out of the process. The city can have an important, particular, role to play. With two BART stations and little land left for development, El Cerrito has little room left to sprawl — certainly not to the extent of a Brentwood or Antioch.

Instead, the plan highlights the opportunity the city has to develop "village-type centers" of mixed-use buildings near the stations, and targets areas along San Pablo Avenue for reinvestment.

El Cerrito is further along the growth curve than newer cities. By endorsing the Shaping Our Future principles, it will not only find ways to accommodate its own growth as a mature city, but will find itself something of a role model of smart growth for the others.

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East Bay Regional Parks

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AC Transit

Joe Wallace Ward 1 (West Contra Costa and Northern Alameda counties). E-mail: jwallace@actransit.org; phone 510-891-7143; fax 510-234-7689.

Cities

El Cerrito: City offices, 10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, 510-215-4300. E-mail: citycouncil@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us

Albany: City offices, 1000 San Pablo Ave., Albany, 510-528-5710.

Kensington: Fire Protection District

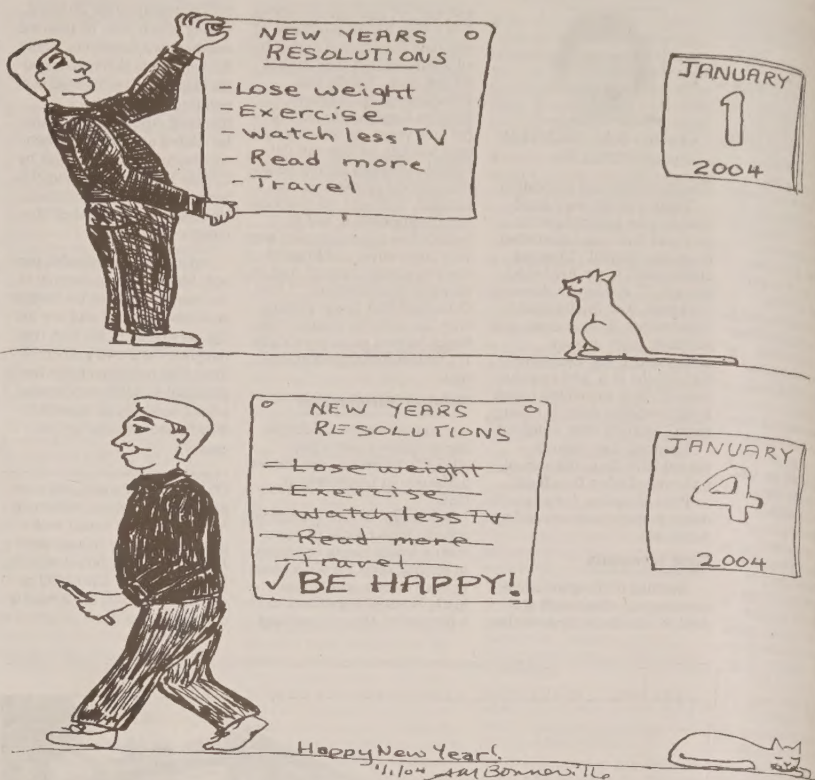
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School boards

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Albany Unified School District: 510-558-3766

JEFF HANSEN • HILLS NEWSPAPERS



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Ashcroft must go

Recent news articles regarding John Ashcroft's Senate bid, which was fined over illegal gifts, and his violation of a case's gag order, demonstrate two more reasons why Ashcroft is not worthy of being our attorney general.

When he took office, he swore to defend our Constitution and now we learn that in at least two instances he has violated laws or legal direction when it suits him. I ask myself: Why do these self-serving, illegal actions surprise me since this is the same man who routinely uses the Patriot Act to trash our civil rights?

The answer is that they do not so much surprise me as anger and frighten me. So, what do we do when the most senior law-enforcement official in our country, and a trusted advisor to our president, repeatedly breaks our laws?

Since, we can't fire him, we should fire his boss. Ashcroft, as attorney general, provides one of the most compelling reasons to elect a Democrat in 2004.

I urge all Americans who truly believe in our Constitution and support our civil rights to join me and work to defeat George W. Bush in November. This is the best way to ensure that we have an attorney general we do not have to fear.

Al Miller
El Cerrito

Driving is a privilege

Bravo to the Latinos who voiced their support for driver's licenses for those so-called "illegal immigrants."

Some Californians appear to view those licenses as a right. They are not. They define a privilege to use the roads created by society. We all pay for that privilege as we renew our driver's licenses each year, and when we renew our vehicle registration.

What is a right is the ownership of the vehicle purchased with one's own earnings. Presumably, the good people involved have done so and now just wish to be able to use their purchases in a lawful manner. Why not let them pay for that privilege?

The Declaration of Independence speaks out for the rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Let's just follow that grand precept with regard to driver's licenses.

George Amberg
El Cerrito

Too beautiful

The sunset over the Marin hills was a collage of brilliant oranges, bright blues and a few strands of deep blue — fantastic!

I truly believe that only in the Bay Area can one witness such a magnificent sunset in the month of December. It really warms my heart and mind.

The Golden Gate Bridge stands majestically upright to one side of this spectacle. And the Marin hills are a solid black ridge of soft peaks and curves. The Bay water gleams a light blue against the shorelines.

As the evening darkens the skies, the colors begin to lose their glamorous colors.

I live in the East Bay and I can see this

gorgeous view from my dining-room window. I feel happily fulfilled with its beauty.

Virginia Throssell
El Cerrito

Safety first

School district engineers say El Cerrito High School is seismically unsafe. In May, the West Contra Costa school board condemned the buildings and authorized use of bond funds to rebuild.

Students and staff members cannot safely remain in these shaky, dilapidated buildings for more than four years of environmental investigation, design and construction if the campus is relocated.

If the school board accepts the rebuilding designs recommended by school district staff members, construction can proceed without delay and students can be in safe classrooms quickly.

There are safe classrooms open now at nearby high schools. There are safe portable classrooms available now. It is not acceptable to leave our children in dangerous buildings.

Geline Covey
El Cerrito

Handguns unnecessary

I am a 13-year-old kid and I'm writing on the topic of handguns.

They are not needed in the everyday life of a law-abiding citizen. Who would go hunting with a handgun? Why would people want handguns, in particular, to protect their family when they can buy another type of gun?

Handguns are not needed in modern life. They should no longer be sold in the United States.

The Australian government seems to share my point of view on the matter. It has a program called the "Handgun Buy Back," in which they buy all guns not meeting their safety requirements.

I'm not going to try to make the U.S. government buy all the handguns in America, but only to make selling of handguns cease. The continuous selling of handguns makes it easy for future criminals to get a small, easily concealed gun.

Though this problem does not seem to need immediate attention, I believe that, at the rate violence is growing in America, something must be done.

Please promote my no-handgun idea and put an end to these easily concealed weapons that have no real purpose in the modern-day life of the law-abiding citizen.

Parker Wells
Kensington

HOW TO REACH US

Letters to the editor reflect the opinion of the writer. Letters must include your first and last name, address and daytime phone number. All letters are subject to verification. All letters are subject to editing for brevity and style. Not all letters may be published.

MAIL: 4301 Lakeside Drive,
Richmond, CA 94530

FAX: 510-243-3574

E-MAIL: journal@cctimes.com

Outrageous fees

I am a senior citizen who recently had to have my much-loved pet euthanized.

The bill was more than \$300 and I was told he was an inoperable tumor in his mouth. It took less than 10 seconds to put him down and cost an additional \$100. Outrageous!

Veterinarian medicine has become a profession lacking compassion. The concern appears to be the bottom line — money.

I wish more people would come forward and speak out.

Jane E. Rahn
Kensington

Remembering Bill

Father Bill and I drove together to a Presidio Housing project in San Francisco and I recited a song I'd just written in unconditional love.

"You should enroll in the senior center," he said.

"I thought they didn't take seniors," he said.

"They will someday," he replied. "I didn't believe in God, but I might be considered a prophet."

"That doesn't matter," he replied. "You'd be perfect." I think we laughed the rest of the way. And saved the house.

Carol D. Bess
Berkeley

Fix home first

I want to help the Iraqis, but I don't understand why we should spend so much money endlessly to rebuild the schools and homes when our own crumbling schools need to be rebuilt.

We need the international community to help pay for rebuilding Iraq. We can't expect many of our allies to do so unless we turn over more power to the United Nations.

That's why I think Congress should say "no" to more money for Iraq. President Bush gives the United Nations the lead role there. Only then will we begin to have hope of controlling the flow of U.S. dollars to Iraq, controlling our own country's roads, schools, hospitals and other basic infrastructure and the need of help.

Carol D. Bess
Berkeley

Wesley Clark could win

In November, George Bush was beaten by the anti-war, left-wing of the Democratic Party.

Recent history shows it takes a moderate Democrat from the South to beat the White House. How about a moderate southerner who, when he was in the White House, successfully held off the long-standing coalition of liberal Democrats and the ruthless dictator Bush from ethnically cleansing Kosovo?

This was done without a single American or Allied fatality.

Gov. Dean may like to claim he was the "Democratic wing of the Democratic Party," but I'd much rather see Wesley Clark run from the electorate wing of the Democratic Party!

James L. Goetz
Oakland

Librarians introduce students to libraries

...of the week:
...your book turned into
...like seeing your oxen
...into bouillon cubes."
...John Le Carre, 1931-

HAVE YOU ever been in the library during a class visit? You can tell it's because one or two of the 20 to 30 children who enter the library, where they are met by the children's librarians.

At the Albany Library, they are taken to the meeting room and entertained with storybook talks and possibly sessions about poetry or the history of a library.

Class visits are part of most of the libraries and they have been around a long time. Librarians use either class visits or individual visits to introduce children to the resources of the library and to foster an interest in reading.

As Paul Rockwell, the Albany librarian at the Albany Library, told me: "The primary purpose of class visits is to bring children and books together." I asked him to describe a class visit to me. What does he mean?

The format, he told me, is basically the same for everyone, but everyone includes a kindergarten through third grade. He begins with storybook talks, because he believes it's important for everyone to be exposed to this ancient art. I agree with him and in fact, I think



JULIE WINKELSTEIN
At the Library

those long jokes people tell are really a way we have of keeping storytelling alive.

He then does a few book talks. These are short presentations librarians use to give a sample of a book without giving away the plot. Paul gave me an example of a book talk — and "left me hanging," as he put it, so now I'm going to have to find this third-grade book, so I can find out what happens. The book talks vary, depending on age — ones for teens may include love stories or scary stories.

Paul also talks about the different kinds of stories, for instance, westerns or mysteries or survival or science fiction. He explains that if you discover a book you like and then what genre it belongs to, you can then find more like it.

Next, there is a tour of the library. For the older students, this will include the reference section and the online databases, especially good for those eighth-grade research projects. For all of them, he emphasizes that the Albany Library is part of a larger system and so the books, videos and CDs owned by the other

branches can be reserved and sent to Albany. Of course, being a public librarian, he talks a little about the democratic aspect of a library and how it is a community resource for all of us.

The visit ends with the opportunity for the students to use their library cards — in some cases, new ones — to check out library materials. After talking to Paul, I looked on the Internet to see if I could find more information about class visits.

The Berkeley Public Library and the Contra Costa County Library system both provide either these or school visits, as do public libraries everywhere. My favorite quote was from the Black-burn Central Library, in England. When asked how her students enjoyed their tour of the library, the teacher replied: "Well worth coming — a good experience for the children ... We hope they will return their books!"

READER REVIEW: Today's book review is from Sophie and the book is Sarah Dessen's "Keeping the Moon." This book is about "Colie, former fat girl, who moves to Colby with her mom Kiki Spark and while she's on tour, Colie stays with her Aunt Mira." One word Sophie would use to describe this book is "invigorating" and she highly recommends it.

Reach librarian Julie Winkelstein at jwinkelstein@aclibrary.org or at the Albany Library.

Puzzles, treadmills slow march of time

I can't believe this year is already over! Why do they fly by so quickly? Does time go this fast? Any suggestions? Time always seems to pass as we put on a few years, I love. Yet, my life is so full — I have been for some time. Truthfully, I hope that I need to stop this fast pace many years yet.

I recommend also doing your stay busy, but even more, suggest that you make some changes in your activities. The new year is a good time to implement change in life. The magic word is "new" — a new year for a new year. Think of all the "olds" that are engaged in at this time: old routines, old habits, old favorites — and don't get me

— I love some old favorites of my own, but I also encourage everyone, including myself, to investigate some new ones that ultimately may also be old favorites.

How active are you, both mentally and physically? Health considerations in both these areas are so important. If you are physically active as you should consider some increase in mental activity. Looking at the direction, if your mental activity is at a satisfactory level, don't try something new on the physical side? Possible limitations are very personal, and different for each individual. You decide to consider some



CONNIE LYNCH
Don't Lose Your Mind

new physical activity and are not now physically active, check with your physician to be sure that you will not be putting yourself at risk.

I find aerobic exercise lowers my stress level, and makes me feel wonderfully relaxed. Taking a brisk walk for at least 30 minutes three or four days a week, and working out with weight-resistance machines and a treadmill at a gym the remaining three days, serve my purpose wonderfully. A trainer at a gym can help you get started properly, eliminating any risk of overdoing and injuring yourself.

For those of us who are on the older side, and many who are not, certain exercises are extremely important to help us avoid or relieve pain due to osteoarthritis. An article in one of last year's Time magazines really describes how building muscle around certain joints can be very helpful. Also exercises that flex joints lubricate and protect them. However, avoid high-stress activities that pound them.

If your current physical activity satisfies you, try homing in

on some new mental challenges.

As always, I encourage increasing the levels of any mental activities that you do at present. My very favorite crossword puzzles are available at all levels from super-easy to super-difficult. Be sure not to choose any puzzles that will discourage you before you can really get started.

Take a look at other kinds of puzzles as well. Most daily newspapers have several types. Select any that interest you. Be sure to try them more than once because their level of difficulty also varies from day to day.

Also visit your local book store, where you will find a large variety of puzzle books. Selecting one that appeals to you can be more helpful than you might realize. A recent research article indicates that puzzle solving (crosswords in particular were mentioned) can help one avoid Alzheimer's disease, or retard its symptoms.

Start 2004 with a new outlook. At least give it a try. Happy new year!

E-mail inquiries for Kensington resident Connie Lynch to conniew@comcast.net or call 510-466-5833. Lynch, Ph.D. is the founder of Mind Works, a mental fitness program designed for older adults and is the author of the book, *Don't Lose Your Mind, Four Components of Superior Mental Fitness* (Bridge Learning Systems, 2000).

LIBRARY ACTIVITIES

Volunteers who want to join the Project Second Chance program at the **Contra Costa Library** and become a reading, writing and spelling tutor have several opportunities to train in January. The next session is Jan. 21 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. and Jan. 24 and 31 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tutors must attend all three sessions. Call 925-927-3250 for information or e-mail the program at psc@ccclib.org.

Project Second Chance (PSC), the Contra Costa County Library Adult Literacy Program, offers free, one-on-one tutoring to people who are over 16, and are not enrolled in school, and who speak English and want to improve their basic reading, writing and spelling skills. Student/tutor pairs meet twice a week, for an hour and a half each time, at public locations throughout the county.

An open mike and featured poet are featured in First Thursdays at the **Albany Library**. The next First Thursday will meet Jan. 8 from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Edith Stone Room, and features poet Ivan Arguelles.

Ivan Arguelles is the author of numerous poetry books and chapbooks, including *The Invention of Spain* and *Looking for Mary Lou*, which won the 1989 William Carlos Williams award. His most recent works are *Tri Loka* and the novella *Orientalia*. He is the co-founder and editor

of Pantograph Press.

Second Wednesdays are drop-in Poetry Writing Workshops, for all ages, led by Alison Seevak. In January, this event is Jan. from 7 to 9 p.m., also in the Edith Stone Room.

Both events are free and ongoing. Light refreshments will be served.

The Albany Library is located at 1247 Marin Ave. and is a branch of the Alameda County Library. Information: 510-526-3720, ext 20.

■ ■ ■ The El Cerrito Library will hold registration for preschool storytimes Jan. 12-22.

Registration is required for the following programs: Babytime Lapsit for children up to 2 years on Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. through Feb. 26; Toddlertime Lapsit for ages 2-3, Thursdays at 11:30 a.m. through Feb. 26 and Picture Book Time for ages 3-5, Tuesdays at 1 p.m. through Feb. 24. A parent must accompany the child for Babytime and Toddlertime Lapsit.

Also at El Cerrito: The library's book club meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. Copies of the current selection are available at the checkout desk. The club's next meeting will be held Jan. 27 to discuss "Daughter of Fortune," by Isabel Allende.

The library invites children in grades 1-6 to read books and earn prizes by participating in

the El Cerrito Library's "I Love to Read" Club this winter. To participate in the club, which is sponsored by the Friends of the El Cerrito Library, each child needs to pick up a reading record at the library, and use it to list 10 books he or she reads between Dec. 1 and Feb. 28. The reading records are then to be returned to the library any time during the month of February for display on the library's bulletin board. Each finisher will receive a paperback book and two Hershey's Kisses.

You can learn the basics of the Internet at the El Cerrito Library's beginning Internet workshops. Practice computer mouse skills, set up e-mail, search the Web, locate library materials in the online catalog, and find the information you need in the library's databases. The workshops are held on alternating Saturday mornings from 10 to 11 a.m.

Call 510-526-7512 to sign up. The El Cerrito Library is at 6510 Stockton Ave. For details, call 510-526-7512.

■ ■ ■

The Kensington Library holds Family Storytimes for all ages on Tuesdays at 7 p.m. (except when special programs are scheduled). The Kensington Library is at 61 Arlington Ave., Kensington, CA 94707-1098. Phone: 510-524-3043

ALBANY PTA NEWS

Albany High School

Script Orders: call Norm Rossman at 510-558-0418, e-mail: norm@normski.com, phone 10-526-2018

Albany Middle School

Script Orders: Call Dorothy Brown at 510-524-3123 or e-mail: dorothy-cmc@yahoo.com

Cornell Elementary School

Script Orders: Call Mark Priven 510-528-

2082 or e-mail: privewest@pacbell.net

Marin Elementary School

Script Orders: Call Helene Class at 510-526-4902 or e-mail: h.class@att.net
Paper script for sale in the office Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 8:30 a.m. and Monday and Friday at 9:30 a.m.

Ocean View Elementary

Script Orders: Call Laurie Amaro at 510-525-0476

AUSD Board of Education

Jan. 6, Regular Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Cornell Multi-Purpose Room

AUSD Calendar

Dec. 22-Jan. 2, winter break (no school)

Items? Call Kay Weinstein at 510-525-0363 or e-mail: kayweinstein@yahoo.com

EL CERRITO SCHOOL NOTES

SPEAKER AT WINDRUSH: Educator Neil Noddings will speak on Thursday, Jan. 15 at 7 p.m. at Windrush School in El Cerrito. A quote from Noddings, an expert on moral education: "We should want more from our educational efforts than adequate academic achievement, and we will not achieve even that meager success unless our children believe that they themselves are cared for and learn to care for others." Noddings' talk will be followed by a question-and-answer session. The event is free. Windrush is at 1800 Elm Street, El Cerrito. Information: 510-970-7580.

— Windrush School

■ ■ ■

CPR FOR ECHS: Ms. Quein reports that the school has been given permission to allow students to fulfill their first aid requirement through an on-line course. The course is free, unless you need a certificate for employment purposes. Students should take the basic first aid course (CPR is no longer required), print the results of the final and bring that in to the counseling office. The Web site is www.firstaidweb.com

HOSTS NEEDED: More than 3,000 students travel annually with the EF Foundation to spend a semester in America, living with a family, attending high school and making friends here. The students come from places as different as Finland and Thailand. Host families are needed to share

their homes with the students — and share in the students' daily discovery of the United States. For information on hosting an EF student, e-mail Laura Million at EFBayArea@yahoo.com

— ECHS e-mail tree

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Middle School • Jan. 7, 7:00 pm — Elementary (K-5) • Jan. 8, 9:00 am
Call to reserve space 510.437.2311 • The Oakland Waterfront

preschool
elementary
middle school

Calendar

Submissions to the Community Calendar must be received **Thursday** one week prior to publication. Listings are on a space-available basis. Mail submissions to Ann Fields, 1969 Mountain Blvd., Oakland, CA 94611; e-mail to afields@cctimes.com or fax to 510-339-4066.

Children

■ UC Berkeley Lawrence Hall of Science holds a science exhibit "Jelly Belly presents Candy Unwrapped," through Jan. 4. LHS is the public science and math center of UC Berkeley. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Location: Centennial Drive below Grizzly Peak. For general information, call 510-642-5132 or visit the Web site at www.lawrencehallscience.org.

■ **Toddler Times** with stories, bounces and stretches, are coming back to the Albany Library, the new series on Mondays through Dec. 15 at 3 p.m. The library is at 1247 Marin Ave. Call for sign-ups: 526-3720, Ext. 17.

■ **Children's Social Skills and Manners** workshops are offered in Albany on Saturdays for two hours, 3 to 5 p.m. Each workshop lasts for four weeks. Details: Linda, 527-6202. ■ **Teen Support Group** meets twice a month Tuesday evenings at the Women's Cancer Resource Center, 3023 Shattuck Ave. The free group is for teens who have a parent or caregiver with cancer. The meeting is co-facilitated by a teen whose mother had breast cancer. 531-7551.

■ Check out books from the **Berkeley Richmond Jewish Community Center Library**. Spend quality time with your kids, meet with the children's librarian, research your Jewish roots or check out best sellers. The library is at 1414 Walnut St. Hours: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Tuesdays. 848-0237.

■ El Cerrito offers **special programs for children** from 22 months to 5 years of age designed to offer parents an opportunity to leave their pre-school children in a safe atmosphere under qualified supervision. The program for ages 22 months to 3-1/2 years meets Monday-Thursday from 9 a.m. to noon. Registration is continuous as long as space is available. Located at 7007 Moers Lane. 215-4371.

■ The Ann Martin Children's Center offers eight "Support Groups For Mothers," sessions for first time mothers and babies their babies under 5 months. Experienced facilitator. 524-0821.

■ **Berkeley's Office of Emergency Services** presents a new series of free Community Emergency Response Training classes. The classes give basic, practical information, including hands-on training in fire suppression, light search and rescue, and disaster first aid. All classes are held at the fire department's Emergency Operations Center, 997 Cedar St. The classes are open to everyone, 18 or older, who lives or works in Berkeley. Register: 844-8736.

Community

■ **Charcot Marie Tooth** support group meets quarterly from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Albany Library, 1247 Marine Ave. CMT is a neuropathic disorder. For more information, call Gail Whitehouse at 408-425-5629.

■ **UC Botanical Garden** at Berkeley, 200 Centennial Drive, offers a sick plant clinic on the first Saturday of every month. Plant pathologist Dr. Robert Raabe, UC Entomologist Dr. Mills, and their team of experts will be available for discussion and questions. The next clinic is from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Jan. 3. 510-643-2755.

■ **The El Cerrito Historical Society** will exhibit items from its collections in the El Cerrito Library's exhibit case through the month of December. Items include pottery from TepCo, as well as old milk bottles from the city's early dairies. Location: 6510 Stockton Ave. 510-643-2755.

■ **The Judah L. Magnes Museum**, 2911 Russell St., presents the exhibit "Brought to Light: The Storied Collections of the Judah L. Magnes Museum" through April 25. Hours: Open Sunday through Thursday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Closed Jewish and federal holidays. Admission is free. 510-549-6950.

■ **Berkeley Neighborhood Computers**, a non-profit organization, provides high-value and high-demand computer technology training for disadvantaged and at-risk individuals. The organization seeks computers and networking equipment to be used for training purposes. All donations are tax deductible. 845-1226 or e-mail bnc@netvalue.net.

■ **Berkeley Camera Club** meet Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m. at the Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley. Share slides and prints, learn what other photographers are doing. Monthly field trips. Details: 525-3565.

■ **TOPS (Take Pounds Off Sensibly)** Chapter CA 1294 meets Thursdays, 7:15-8:30 p.m. Thursday at Mira Vista UCC Church, 7075 Cutting Blvd. TOPS is a non-profit organization assisting men and women in weight control. Betty Coates at 235-0490.

■ **Turning Point at the YWCA**, 2600 Bancroft Way, sponsors Resume Clinics

on Tuesday afternoons, or by appointment. For an appointment, leave a message several days before you would like to meet. Anne Levine has a background in design and education. Call 848-6370.

■ **Berkeley's Office of Emergency Services** presents a new series of free Community Emergency Response Training classes. The classes give basic, practical information, including hands-on training in fire suppression, light search and rescue, and disaster first aid. All classes are held at the fire department's Emergency Operations Center, 997 Cedar St. The classes are open to everyone, 18 or older, who lives or works in Berkeley. Register: 844-8736.

■ **Berkeley Art Museum**, Pacific Film Archive offers a guided tour of Equal Partner: Men and Women Principals in Contemporary Architectural Practice presented by graduate students from the UC Berkeley Department of Architecture, College of Environmental Design on alternating Thursdays at 12:15 p.m. and on Sundays at 2 p.m. 642-0808.

■ **Overeaters Anonymous** meet Fridays at 1:30 p.m. at the Northbrae Community Church in Berkeley, 941 The Alameda between Solano and Marin avenues, in Room 2—the child-care room—parents may bring their children. This organization is for individuals who eat compulsively. 525-5231.

■ **Toastmasters**, do it now. Stand up and say what you mean. Come practice Tuesday, noon to 1 p.m. at 700 Heinz Ave. Call 883-6708 for details.

■ **Civil Rights** activists needed. Write the ACLU chapter of Berkeley, Albany, Richmond, and Kensington. P.O. Box 11141, Berkeley, CA, 94701.

■ **"Work Buddies"**; volunteers needed to work with people in early stage Alzheimer's Disease. Minimum six-month commitment, two to three hours per week. Training provided. Contact Nannette Lipton, 644-8292.

Exhibits

■ **Global Exchange and Mexico Solidarity Network** sponsor a photography exhibit "En la Orilla de la Luz-At the Edge of Light. Photographs from Chiapas, Mexico, 1995-2001," by Julia Meier-Wiedenbach through Jan. 6, at La Pena Cultural Center, 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. For more information, call 415-255-7296 ext. 229 or 415-495-6334.

■ The exhibit **Early Women of Berkeley** (1878-1953) and their organizations



runs through March 27. The exhibit, curated by the College Women's Club/Berkeley Branch of the American Association of University Women and the Berkeley Historical Society, celebrates how women shaped Berkeley's history, working alone and through their clubs. A women's history lecture series is also planned. At the Berkeley History Center, 1931 Center St. Details: 848-0161. Admission free.

Film/dance/stage

■ The **Berkeley Richmond Jewish Community Center**, 1414 Walnut St., presents the film "La Passante," on Jan. 11 from 2 to 4:30 p.m. \$2 suggested donation. A peer-led discussion follows the movie. For more information, call 510-848-0237.

See CALENDAR, Page A7

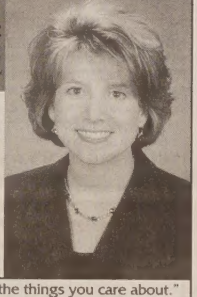
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Calendar

ALBANY PAGE A6

Albany Players production "The Love of the Old Oak Theater," runs through Dec. 28 at the Oak Theater, 1301 Shattuck Ave., Albany. Tickets: \$8 adults, \$5 seniors, \$3 children. For more information, call 510-704-8210.

Albany International folk dance classes for all ages at the Albany Community Center, 2566 Telegraph Ave., Albany. No experience necessary. \$20 for the opening session, \$10 for all Thursday sessions. For more information, call 510-704-8210.

Albany Night Folk Dancing: 8 p.m. - 10 p.m. No partners necessary for line dancing. Classes from Rumania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Near East and other countries. Drop in for good fun. \$20 for the opening session, \$10 for all Thursday sessions. For more information, call 510-704-8210.

Albany Folkdance classes take place the 1st and 3rd Thursdays at Ashkenaz and Dance Community Center, 2566 Telegraph Ave., Albany. No experience necessary. Drop in for good fun. \$20 for the opening session, \$10 for all Thursday sessions. For more information, call 510-704-8210.

Albany Folkdance classes take place the 1st and 3rd Thursdays at Ashkenaz and Dance Community Center, 2566 Telegraph Ave., Albany. No experience necessary. Drop in for good fun. \$20 for the opening session, \$10 for all Thursday sessions. For more information, call 510-704-8210.

Health

Albany Health and Community Education classes in dance, fitness, martial arts and more; University of Albany, 2566 Telegraph Ave., Albany. For more information, call 510-704-8210.

Learning

Albany City Club, 2315 Durant Ave., Albany. Private social club, offering yoga class for seniors 55 and older living in Oakland, Emeryville, Berkeley and Albany. Earn when you learn. Interested in working with children? You can receive college credit in Early Childhood Development while being paid. Details: 238-3554.

Albany Adult School offers **ceramics classes** from 9 a.m. to 12 noon on Tuesdays at the St. John's Senior Center, 2727 College Ave. Classes are free, materials and firing charges are not. Lunch is offered at a minimal charge. For more information, call Diana Bohn at 525-5497.

St. John's Prime Timers Senior Center in Berkeley offers classes in exercise, hand-built ceramics, copper enameling, wood working, weaving, creative writing and tap dancing. There are speakers on matters of current interest and travel slide presentations once a month. Classes are on-going. New members and seniors over 50 are always welcome. Lunch and friendly conversation are offered at a minimal charge. St. John's Presbyterian Church, 2727 College Avenue, Berkeley. Call 845-6830 for time and schedules.

Beginning Interview Workshops take place at the El Cerrito Library, 6510 Stockton Ave. Learn the basics of the Internet mouse skills, email, web searching, and the library's on-line catalog and databases. Classes are free of charge. Alternate Saturday mornings from 10 to 11 a.m. Call 510-526-7512 to sign up.

The Albany Library, 1247 Marin Ave., offers free, ongoing **chess instruction** Tuesdays, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. The lessons range from fundamental to advanced topics, and also casual play. This program is led by David Pruess, who holds the Senior Master title and is one of the top chess players and teachers in California. All levels are welcome and chess sets are provided. Call Julie Winkelstein at 510-526-3720 ext. 19.

Folkdance classes, Mondays 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Arlington Community Center, 53 Arlington Ave. (across from the Kensington Library). Simple, clear lessons for people of all levels. Emphasis is good music and fun. Cost: \$30 for 6-week session (pro-rated fees apply), \$8 for drop in session. Details: Mel Harte, at 848-5289 before 9 p.m.

Assets Senior Employment offers a job training program for income-eligible people 55 and older living in Oakland, Emeryville, Berkeley and Albany. Earn when you learn. Interested in working with children? You can receive college credit in Early Childhood Development while being paid. Details: 238-3554.

Julia Morgan Center for the Arts, 2640 College Ave., offers family-friendly program classes, workshops and activities taught by professional teaching artists, all aimed at bringing arts participation into everyday lives. Details: 845-8542 or www.juliamorgan.org.

The Berkeley Adult School offers Adult Basic Education classes, High School Diploma Requirement classes, General Educational Development Preparation classes which can be used to earn a GED certificate, and Preparation for US Citizenship classes. The classes are free. BAS also offers, for an affordable fee, a variety of vocational classes and introductory and advanced computer classes. Details: 644-6130.

Interview Clinics sponsored by Turning Point Center at the YWCA, 2600 Bancroft Way, are held on Monday mornings from 9-11 by appointment. 30-minute sessions are \$15 for YWCA members and \$20 for non-members. Call 848-6370 and leave a message to reserve an appointment time.

Berkeley Community Media, Channel 25, offers affordable classes in **video production and editing** to Berkeley residents. Free orientations designed to introduce BCM to the public are held Thursdays, 6:30-7:30 p.m. at 2239 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way. Details: 848-2288 and ask for Patrick, John or Sage.

Ashkenaz, 1317 San Pablo Ave., offers **dance classes** ranging from Afro-Cuban to Kerali dance of India, to West Coast Swing to Lindy Hop and East Coast Swing. Ashkenaz is a non-profit music and dance community center. Details: 525-5054. n Life Stories/College and Ceramics classes forming at St. John's Senior Center, 2727 College Ave., Tuesday mornings 9 a.m. to noon. All are welcome. Free. Sponsored by Berkeley Adult School. Details: 845-6830.

Dance and fitness classes open to all in flamenco, Afro-Brazilian, belly dance, salsa, swing, ballroom, tap, theater dance, yoga, chi gung, tai chi, aikido, pilates-based body conditioning and more at the YWCA, 2600 Bancroft Way, Berkeley. Drop in fees: \$8-10. Information: 848-6370.

Let's Swing and Jitterbug: 7 p.m. beginning classes, 8 p.m. intermediate; four-week dance classes beginning the first Tuesday of the month; Finish

Brotherhood Hall, 1970 Chestnut, Berkeley; Diana Castillo, 549-3591; \$40 for four classes.

Lecture/workshop

The Berkeley Camera Club meets every Tuesday evening, at 7:30 p.m. at the Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley. Share your slides and prints and learn what other photographers are doing. Monthly field trips. Don, 510-525-3565 or www.berkeleycameraclub.org.

Tai Chi Chuan and Chi-kung classes take place at Berkeley Unitarian Church at 7 p.m. on Wednesday evenings and 9 a.m. Saturday mornings at Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists, 1924 Cedar St. People of all ages and physical conditions are welcome to practice. Donation: \$65. 268-4995.

The YWCA offers free orientations of its **Turning Point Career Center**. The orientations outline resources available the center's workshops and other offerings. They are held every Tuesday, at 1:30 p.m. The Turning Point Career Center is located at 2600 Bancroft Way, 848-6370.

Learn computer applications for the "working" world using Windows '95 and '98 and Microsoft Office 2000 software, Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, Publisher. Class offered: Monday-Friday, 2:15-6:15 p.m. Location: Contra Costa County Office of Education, 13925 San Pablo Ave., Suite No. 111, San Pablo. 237-0840 or www.ccoec.k12.ca.us/rop.

Literary events

The Alameda County Library presents **Open Mike and Featured Poet** sessions on the first Thursdays of each month. The January event is from 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday Jan. 8, in the Edith Stone Room, featuring poet Ivan Argueta. Second Wednesdays are drop in poetry writing workshops for all ages. The next workshop is from 7 to 9 p.m. Jan. 14, in the Edith Stone Room. All events are free. For more information, call Julie Winkelstein at 510-526-3720 ext. 20.

Meetings/lectures

Powerhouses, a ski, snowboard and social club meet the second Tuesdays, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Oakland Hilton, Amelia restaurant, 1 Hegenberger Rd., and fourth Tuesdays 7 to 9 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Jupiter, 2181 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. Call 510-769-7668 or visit the Web site at www.powerhouses.com.

Berkeley Camera Club meet Tuesday evenings, 7:30 p.m. at the Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley. Share your slides and prints and learn what other photographers are doing. Monthly field trips for more information, call Don at 510-525-3565 or visit the Web site at www.berkeleycameraclub.org.

St. John's Prime Timers meet on Tuesday mornings at 2727 College Ave. Sharon Staikfield will speak about her mission to four local nursing homes at 11 a.m. Dec. 16. Visitors are always welcome. For more information, call 510-845-6830.

Albany Library, 1247 Marin Ave., presents poetry events: First Thursdays include Open Mike and Featured Poet sessions from 7 to 9 p.m. Second Wednesdays are drop-in Poetry Writing Workshops, for all ages. Second Saturdays are drop-in Poetry Writing Workshops for grades 4-8. All three events are free and on-going. Light refreshments will be served. Call Julie Winkelstein at 510-526-3720 ext. 20.

Storytelling for Adults, a group of storytellers, and listeners, who love to listen to stories, to keep the oral tradition alive, meet from 7 to 8:45 p.m. on the first Thursday each month at the Claremont Branch, Berkeley Public Library, 1940 Benevue, at Ashby. Free. 610-644-6880; or 525-1533.

The Reading Edge is available for public use at the Berkeley Public Library, 2090 Kittredge St. This computer

scans printed text and reads it back aloud with a synthesized voice. It's available for anyone with a disability who requires its use to access print material. Users must complete a brief training session before using the Reading Edge; after that, reservations are needed. Call at 644-6648 to set up a training session.

The El Cerrito Toastmasters offers basic public speaking and leadership activities and programs. Speakers of all skill levels are invited to come, observe and participate. Meetings occur every second and fourth Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the El Cerrito Community Center, 7007 Mooser Lane. For more information contact Jim Bruce at jim@peachpit.com.

Kol Hadash, the Bay Area's only Jewish Humanistic Congregation, with more than 110 family members from around the Bay Area, meets on the fourth Friday of each month for a regular Shabbat (Sabbath), every other month on a Saturday for a Family Shabbat. The group holds Sunday school classes two Sundays a month, celebrates all the major Jewish holidays and holds special events from time to time. Location: Albany Community Center, 1249 Marin Ave. 428-1492.

Miscellany

Berkeley Youth Orchestra, 70 young musicians from fifth through 10th grade, is holding mid-year auditions for its 2003-04 season. Auditions will be held by appointment, the week of Jan. 5. To schedule an audition or to find out more about the orchestra: visit the Web site at www.byweb.org or write to Berkeley Youth Orchestra, P.O. box 1294, Berkeley CA 94701 or call Marion Atherton, Berkeley Youth Orchestra manager at 510-663-3296, or e-mail manager@byweb.org.

See CALENDAR, Page A8

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Calendar

FROM PAGE A7

■ **The Lois Club Bay Area Chapter** will end a fabulous year with a gala luncheon on Dec. 30. The noon gathering will be at Paradiso Restaurant in San Leandro. All individuals with the first name of Lois and guests are welcome. Call Lois Wahle, 428-2557, in Oakland, or Lois Trill, 276-2422, in San Leandro for reservations or Club information.

■ **St. John's Prime Timers** in Berkeley offers ongoing classes at 9:30 a.m. Tuesdays at St. John's Presbyterian Church, 2727 College Ave. Classes include exercises, ceramics, copper enameling, woodworking, weaving, creative writing, and tap dancing (Thursdays). New members are always welcome, especially seniors' over 50. Call 845-6830 for more information.

■ **The Center for Independent Living** announces its newly created **Asian Outreach Program** to assist Asian individuals with disabilities, particularly new immigrants. Providing services and advocacy in Cantonese, Vietnamese, and English, program staff are culturally sensitive and knowledgeable of community and government service available to individuals with disabilities. For more information, call CIL at 510-763-9999.

■ **Friendship Circle**, a Jewish club for older adults, meet 11:30 to 1:30 p.m. Wednesdays, at the Oakland Senior Center, 200 Grand Ave. The club is an outreach program of Berkeley Richmond Jewish Community Center. Activities include day trips, Jewish holiday celebrations, theater outings, entertainment, speaker and much more. Call Maria at 848-0237 ext. 115 for details.

■ **Improve your speaking skills** by attending **Berkeley Communicators' Toastmaster** meetings, the first and third Wednesdays each month at 7:15 a.m. at Vault's Cafe, 3250 Adeline St. Call 527-2337 for more information.

■ **The Berkeley Camera Club** meets Tuesday evenings 7:30 p.m. at the Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda. Share your slides and prints and learn what other photographers are doing. Monthly field trips. For more details call Don at 525-3565.

■ **Disabled American Veterans** Chapter 25 meets on the third Tuesday of the month. The evening begins with a no host dinner and fellowship at 7 p.m. at 2068 Center St. A short business meeting follows at 8 p.m. at 1931 Center St., the Veterans Memorial Building. Price: \$3. Women who have had relatives in the US Military are invited to attend and join the auxiliary. For more details call R. DeRiti, Cmdr. D.A.V. Chapter 25, 916-372-8364.

■ **The Berkeley Avatar Metaphysics** Toastmasters Club meet on the first and third Thursdays, from 6:15 to 7:30 p.m., at 2515 Hillegass Ave. Public speaking skills and metaphysics come together. For details, call 869-2547 or 643-7645.

■ **The Kensington Senior Activity** Center meets on Thursdays 9 a.m.

to 2 p.m. in the Arlington Community Church, 52 Arlington Ave. The center's community program of life-long learning is presented by the West Contra Costa Adult School. Attend any class or event you choose. Everyone over 55 is welcome. Details: 526-9146 or 547-1969.

■ **Speak Smart! Join Beijing Express Toastmasters**. The Smart Club! Meetings take place each Monday, 6:15 to 7:30 p.m. at Peking Express Restaurant, 2068 Center St. For additional information call 549-9671.

■ **Toastmasters**: Stand up and say what you mean. Come practice with us. Every Tuesday, Noon to 1 p.m. at 700 Heinz Ave. Berkeley. Call 883-6708 for more information.

■ **The Berkeley Arthritis Support and Education Group** meets on the second Tuesday of each month (except December) 1 to 2:30 p.m. in the Matfly Auditorium, Herrick Campus, 2001 Dwight Way. For additional information call 204-4503.

■ **Toastmasters on Campus** meet the second and fourth Wednesday of the month from 6:15 to 7:30 p.m. at the English Language Program Building, 2515 Hillegass. Details: 704-1822.

■ **"Voices of Healing"** is a group exploring the psychological and spiritual dimensions of illness and healing. The group meets on the second Friday of each month, 1 to 2:30 p.m. in North Berkeley. Call 528-1235 for more information.

■ **State Health Toastmasters** meet every second, third and fourth Thursday of the month from 12:10 to 1:10 p.m. at the State Health building, 2151 Berkeley Way. Details: 649-7750.

■ **Higher Alignment**: 7 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Mondays; fun, informative seminars creating spiritual partnerships; Feldenkrais Center, 830 Bancroft Way, Berkeley; 415-461-5337; \$20.

■ **Alta Bates Support Groups** - Arthritis Support Group meets the second Tuesday of every month; 1 - 2:30 p.m.; 204-4503. Call for additional special events.

■ **Overeaters Anonymous**, a 12-step program providing free aid for those with eating problems, meets in Berkeley every Saturday at 8:30 a.m. (newcomers at 8 a.m.) at St. John's Church, 2727 College Ave. and in Richmond every Thursday at 7 p.m. at Kaiser Hospital, 901 Nevin (take Elevator C to the third floor). For further information, call 273-9292.

■ **TOPS**: 9:30 a.m., Mondays; Take Pounds Off Sensibly, Albany Chapter meets at 980 Stannage St. at Marin; 233-2948 or Karen, 525-6858.

■ **Alta Bates Rehabilitation Center** and East Bay Neurology sponsors a free monthly **stroke support group**. No advance reservations are required, drop-in anytime. The group meets the first Tuesday of each month from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. in the Matfly Auditorium on Herrick Campus, 2001 Dwight Way. Berkeley. Details: 204-4503.

Music

■ **La Pena Cultural Center**, 3105 Shattuck Ave., presents **"Domingo de Rumba,"** at 3:30 p.m. Jan. 4. Afro-Cuban percussion with vocals and dance, in a relaxed setting. The Rumba is an open jam session for those who want to play, sing or dance. For more information, call 510-849-2568.

■ **Nigerian-born master drummers**, Rasaki Aladokun and Olusola Adeyemi will introduce UC Berkeley Lawrence Hall of Science visitors to the talking drum at noon and 1:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 26. The event includes the central percussion instrument of Africa's many rhythmic styles—as well as the music, costume and movement of their native land. Admission: \$8.50 for adults; \$6.50 for youth 5-18, seniors and disabled; \$4.50 for children 3 to 4. For more information, call 510-642-5132 or visit the Web site at www.lawrencehall.org.

Outdoors

■ **The UC Berkeley Botanical Garden**, 200 Centennial Drive, Strawberry Canyon, offers a **free sick plant clinic** on the first Saturday of every month from 9 a.m. to noon. Dr. Raabe will diagnose. Details: 643-2755.

■ **Learn to feed and care for orphaned baby birds**: house sparrows, starlings and pigeons are introduced species that are not afforded care by rehabilitation groups. You can make an important contribution in returning these species to the wild life they deserve to have. Free training and some supplies. Call Myra 531-3042 or Lelia 655-3911.

■ **East Bay Regional Park Botanical Garden** Tilden Park, presents regular tours, seven days a week. Week days 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays, and Sundays 2 p.m. Special tours by appointment. Call 841-8732. For a schedule of upcoming classes call 925-820-1021.

Religion

■ **Kol Hadash**, the Bay area's only Jewish Humanistic Congregation, meets at the Albany Community Center, 1249 Marin Ave., for a regular Shabbat (Sabbath), usually on the 4th Friday of each month, a Family Shabbat every other month on a Saturday, hold Sunday School classes two Sundays a month, celebrate all the major Jewish holidays, and hold special events from time to

time. The group also collects non-perishable food for the needy. Call 510-428-1492 or email kolhadash@aol.com for information.

Support

■ **If you have lost someone you love to cancer**, come for gentle guidance through the basic steps of grieving at the **Women's Cancer Resource Center**, 5741 Telegraph Ave. Grief Information Sessions take place from 6-7:30 p.m. Dec. 8, or 6-7:30 p.m. Dec. 22. RSVP 510-420-7900 for more information, or visit www.wcrc.org.

■ **Overeaters Anonymous** - Have a problem with food? Twelve-step support groups dealing with these issues meet at 10:30 a.m. Sundays at Mandana Community Recovery Center, 3989 Howe St. in Oakland (enter on 41st Street Way); 7:30 Wednesdays at Piedmont Community Church, 400 Highland (enter on Mountain, parallel to Highland); 7:30 Thursdays at Piedmont Gardens, 110 41st Street; and 6 p.m. Fridays at East Bay Church of Religious Science, 4130 Telegraph Avenue. For other meetings or more information, call 510-923-9491.

■ **Jewish Family and Children's Services** of the East Bay offers the following community support groups.

— **Divorce Support Group**: Pre-registration required. Wednesday evenings, Jewish Family & Children's Services of the East Bay in Walnut Creek. Call Dr. Carla Haimowitz at 925-927-2000.

— **Bereavement Support Groups**: No charge. Pre-registration required. Wednesdays, 4:30-6 p.m., JFCS/East Bay in Berkeley, 510-704-7480 ext. 968. Thursdays, 3:40-6 p.m., JFCS/East Bay in Walnut Creek, 925-927-2000 ext. 740.

— **Cancer Support Group**: No charge. Tuesdays from 12:30 - 2 p.m., Markstein Center, room 2810, 2nd floor, 450 30th Street, Oakland. Call 510-869-8833.

— **Support Group for Women 60 Years and Older**: Finally, a special group for older single women. Explore new options for coping with life transitions, making new friendships, dealing with family and peer relationships, and changing old habits. Pre-registration required. Second and fourth Mondays from 3:30-5 p.m. at the Berkeley/Richmond Jewish Community Center. Fee: \$10/session. Call Marti Kutnik LCSW at 510-704-7480 ext. 740.

— **Interfaith Couples Group**: Thursdays,

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7:15-9:15 p.m. at Jewish Family & Children's Services of the East Bay in Berkeley. Call Cathy Diamond, MFT at 510-704-7480 ext. 225.

— **Social Skills and Anger Management for Boys**: A special group for 7-9 year old boys expressing anger and other feelings inappropriately, or are having difficulty making and keeping friends. Pre-registration required. Mondays, 4-5:15 p.m. at Jewish Family & Children's Services of the East Bay in Berkeley. Fee: \$40/session. Sliding scale and medical accepted. David Edelson, MA, MFT at 510-704-7480 ext. 267.

■ **National Alliance for the Mentally Ill**-East Bay Chapter sponsors a support group to provide information and support to families of children and adolescents with mental illness. The next meeting is from 7 to 8 p.m. Feb. 18, at Albany United Methodist Church, 980 Stannage St., in Albany. Support meetings are free and offer parent and other family members a chance to talk with others in order to share information and get emotional support. For more information, call NAMI-East Bay at 510-524-1250.

■ **Women's Cancer Resource Center** offers support groups throughout the Bay area. If you are interested in attending a group, call the Helpline at 510-420-7900 during the Center's open hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 12 to 4 p.m. on the second and fourth Saturdays.

■ **Bereavement Support Group** meets Thursdays, 3:40-6 p.m. at Jewish Family and Children's Services in Walnut

HILLS NEW

Creek. Topics include: loss, grief, loneliness, isolation, anger, depression, and the need for support. Meetings are in a warm, Jewish center (donations accepted). No charge. Call Maria at 848-0237 ext. 115 for more information. Sponsored by Synagogue and Jewish Family and Children's Services of the East Bay.

Volunteers
■ **University of California Garden at Berkeley** needs volunteers for planting and learning about growing plants for the agator, working in the entrance Kiosk, assisting with membership, special office support. For more call Candice Schatz, or email at caschat@ucdavis.edu

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Local planning groups decide against merger

transit commission and Association of Bay Area Governments keep their status, though

Lisa Vorderbruggen

STAFF WRITER
ALBANY — They went to the meeting. They talked. But in the end, the Bay Area's top regional planning agencies called for a merger.

The Association of Bay Area Governments and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission voted to keep their status, though they have recommended a merger.

Under the merger, you would have two willing participants: the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Association of Bay Area Governments.

Colleagues at MTC have not perfectly clear they do not want to merge. The two agencies have decided they want to be more than just neighbors.

Member task force, split between the two agencies, met Friday to form a joint committee.

The advisory panel will work on issues such as developing incentives for cities and counties to transit, and reviewing local planning efforts.

Finally, the task force will sit with the committee until it crafts a

permanent structure in upcoming meetings.

MTC will hire one person to help carry out the committee's work.

The joint panel falls far short of what the Association of Bay Area Governments has even proposed legislation that would force a merger.

They envisioned consolidated staffs — the agencies occupy the same building — and a reconfigured governance board with authority over transportation, land use and housing initiatives.

The effectiveness of the joint panel will depend on how the agencies use it, said Association of Bay Area Governments chief Eugene Leong.

"If this policy committee does nothing more than receive reports, it's not very meaningful," said Leong.

"But if you give it some authority, then maybe you could begin to make some very small steps in the right direction."

But the more powerful transportation commission appears unlikely to share its clout.

Many of its members view ABAG, a member organization of 100 of the Bay Area's 101 cities and counties, as an advocacy organization committed to the preservation of local control.

The association has no teeth except in housing, where it distributes the state-mandated num-

ber of houses that cities and counties must accommodate in their general plans.

In contrast, the commission determines where to spend billions of dollars a year in federal and state transportation money.

It doesn't need ABAG to tie land use to transportation, they say.

Commissioners point to the agency's plan to hike investment by one-third in programs such as incentives to build housing, jobs and shops near transit.

Ironically, ABAG and MTC already sit on an advisory joint panel with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and others called the Regional Agency Coordinating Committee, or RAC.

It meets to talk about the region's clean air plan and the Regional Livability Footprint, a smart-growth initiative that calls for communities to divert growth away from farmlands on the urban fringe into existing cities near transit.

Cities and counties make land-use decisions in California, a tightly held right unlikely to change despite a proliferation of regional committees, said RAC

chairman and Commissioner DeSaulnier.

"I now see RAC as a more feasible way to get a better coordinated regional planning than a merger," he said. "It brings in the air board, which has clout as a regulator and has expressed interest in land-use issues."

The group debated whether to assign the joint policy work to the coordinating committee, but ABAG president and Walnut Creek Mayor Gwen Regalia called RAC a forum, not a planning body.

She argued for the new joint committee to operate like a city planning commission: It would review plans and policies, and send recommendations to the two full boards.

Regalia also called for the panel to combine the agencies' subcommittees that perform similar functions and promote shared staffing of common programs.

"We both have housing programs; why not have one housing program?" Regalia said.

Reach Lisa Vorderbruggen at 925-945-4773 or lvorderb@cctimes.com.

Trees

FROM PAGE 1

"It's up to the commission or board to come to its own decisions," she said.

Tree commission chairwoman Jennifer Lowe said members were unsure about what the council was asking of them and were looking for guidance. Potter said she was simply reiterating what she had heard during the process.

"I was directly asked by the commission to give them guidance on what the council was looking for," Potter said. "And I relied on the minutes of the (May council meeting) and summarized what I heard at previous tree commission meetings."

"I did say the view people seem to be coming together in support of a Tiburon-like ordinance," she added, "and that was a shift from a more extreme position."

Both Potter and Lowe said commission members recommended the city draft an ordinance that could stand up in court if the city is sued, as Tiburon's ordinance does. But, they said, the commission also asked that the new ordinance contain language that specifies

the value of trees, similar to Berkeley's ordinance.

"I don't think we're picking one or the other," said Potter. "I think we want a blend, and (should) craft one that works for El Cerrito."

The conflict that surfaced somewhat at past meetings was less evident on Dec. 18. Still, Lowe asked several times that the roughly 80 people inside the community center not make loud comments. Unlike the previous two meetings, which included public input, commission members discussed the ordinance amongst themselves, with occasional guidance from city attorney Janet Coleson and Potter.

Lowe said the meeting minutes will be reviewed at the next commission meeting, set for 7 p.m. Jan. 20. The recommendations could change if commissioners decide the minutes do not correctly reflect what they decided. The approved minutes will serve as recommendations to the council.

Reach Alan Lopez at 510-243-3578 or at alopez1@cctimes.com.

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Zhang repeatedly spanked the girl with the spoon handle for three to four minute intervals, police said, until the girl agreed she wanted to jump off the park's wooden platform. The father took the girl's sister into another room during the beating, Maples said.

Zhang and Chan were arraigned Dec. 18, Cashman said.

The children were placed in protective custody, Maples said. Zhang and Chan were held Monday at County Jail in Richmond, in lieu of \$150,000 bail and \$100,000 bail, respectively.

Reach Karl Fischer at 510-262-2728 or kfischer@cctimes.com.

child

PAGE A1

park Dec. 14 and watched children jumping from a platform in the park jump. Zhang wanted her to jump off the platform and other children.

The girl was afraid, so Zhang ordered her to jump. Zhang and Chan were held Monday at County Jail in Richmond, in lieu of \$150,000 bail and \$100,000 bail, respectively.

ing, forced the girl to re-attempted jump at least once; she fell face first each time, according to the report. After, the family returned

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Review

FROM PAGE A1

the city will no longer attempt to resolve view disputes. It throws most of the other questions about the city's controversial view preservation ordinance to discussion by the tree commission.

■ The Bill Lewis Teen Center in Albany reopens after nine months of renovations.

■ Liberal crusader Art Schroeder is presented with the Nancy Gans Award for Outstanding Political Action in the Public Interest at an El Cerrito Democratic Club meeting.

■ Portola Middle School Students mourn the death of Frank Lamar Thomas. The 14-year-old was shot and killed in Richmond on May 19.

■ The Albany-El Cerrito Exchange Club honors El Cerrito police officer Ken Zink with the 2003 officer of the year award.

■ Residents tell the Albany Planning and Zoning Commission that they have reservations about Target opening a store on Eastshore Highway in Albany. But they also welcome the store. The commission holds an additional meeting to get public comment before making a recommendation to the city's Reinvestment Agency.

June

■ The El Cerrito Chamber of Commerce names Kathleen Glenn the city's small business owner of the year. She owns the Glenn Custom Framing and Gallery of Art on Stockton Avenue.

■ Assemblywoman Loni Hancock opens a district office at El Cerrito Plaza.

■ Circus Chimera performs shows at Portola Middle School. The events act as a fund-raiser for the Cerrito Theater Restoration Fund.

■ Neighbors are outraged after work begins to install a new roof at the Albany Veteran's Memorial building at Memorial Park. Neighbors want the original Spanish-tile roof to remain. The county eventually agrees to buy back and place the original tiles on the roof. It costs the county tens of thousands of dollars more than planned.

■ The Citizens for Eastshore State Park blanket the city with four-page brochures detailing its preferred plan for the Albany waterfront. It envisions more parkland and less development than the plan proposed by Magna, the owner of the Golden Gate Fields.

■ Jack Boster is sworn in as El Cerrito postmaster.

■ The El Cerrito council repeals the city's property transfer tax after the Citizens Alliance questions its legality. The repeal costs the city more than \$800,000 a year and creates a backlash from residents who can't get their money back because of a one-year statute of limitations.

July

■ The Albany Reinvestment Agency approves a 164,000 square foot Target Store for the Eastshore Highway. It ends a month of public debate about the project. It's scheduled to be built next October.

■ Albany is at odds with Caltrans over the sale of a four-and-a-half acre parcel the city wants



ALBANY FIRE BATTALION Chief Brian Crudo, left, and Capt. John Weitzel look for clues in a fire that destroyed Dana Meyer automotive repair at the corner of San Pablo Avenue and Castro Street in Albany Oct. 29.

to turn into a park. The city looks to Assemblywoman Loni Hancock to bring the cost down. A bill she sponsors is tabled by the Senate until January.

■ Dana Milner is named Albany's Citizen of the Year by the Albany Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. He's lauded for leading a three-month effort to rebuild Lupe Mendoza's home on Santa Fe Avenue. Richard Gong and Kirsten Haller are named Albany's Youths of the Year.

August

■ Lt. Bill Palmi — the Elvis impersonator who sang about traffic safety — retires from the Albany Police Department.

■ El Cerrito begins a \$2 million street repair project.

■ The Albany Historical Group looks at obtaining a 1920s-era two-bedroom, one bath house that sits on the Gill Tract, a UC Berkeley agricultural research field. The lack of a place to put the building frustrates the process.

■ The City Council grants a 19.6 percent raise to City Manager Scott Hanin. It incrementally increases his salary to \$147,948 over one year. City Council members say they want to bring the manager's salary closer to the county median and have him be paid more than the city's police and fire chiefs.

■ An out-of-control dump truck careens down Moeser Lane in El Cerrito, hitting cars and crashing into an El Cerrito house that erupts in flames. Several people are injured. It knocks out power to thousands of homes.

■ The city's Redevelopment Agency agrees to sell Del Norte Place, an apartment and retail complex on San Pablo Avenue at Cutting Boulevard. The sale is estimated to generate \$1.4 million for the agency.

September

■ A diversity forum focused

on breaking down barriers and promoting understanding between races is held in El Cerrito. It's spearheaded by the city's human relations commission.

■ Dan Adams is promoted to Albany Police lieutenant. The 11-year veteran replaces Bill Palmi, who retired the previous month.

■ Underground utility lines and tree roots slow renovations at Memorial Park in Albany.

■ Parents protest the loss of small class sizes for sophomore English classes at Albany High School.

■ Judy Lieberman is appointed assistant to the city administrator in Albany. Lieberman is formerly with the city's community development department.

■ Albany firefighter Mike Cesmat helps save a woman trapped in a burning car in Solano County.

■ The El Cerrito Council approves allocating an emergency \$125,000 to pay for replacement and repair of traffic signal equipment at Moeser Lane and Richmond Street after it was damaged during August's truck accident.

October

■ "Bum's Paradise," a documentary about the homeless who lived at the Albany bulb, is screened in San Francisco for the first time.

■ The El Cerrito council is criticized after it declines to give refunds to people who paid a property transfer tax but are outside of a one-year statute of limitations. Councilwoman Gina Brusatori attempts to provide the refunds but is outvoted by the other council members.

■ A barbecue is held at Key Route Boulevard to celebrate a landscaping project there and raise money for future projects. The project, headed by resident Hugo Larman and the Albany Community Foundation, begins in December.



ALBANY RESIDENT John Sanchez was treated for Leukemia in December 2002, and in 2003 he and his mother, Becca Sanchez, were tackling the next step — finding a bone marrow donor.

■ City Manager Scott Hanin and financial services manager Brian Foster report that the city's finances look OK, but look less rosy in the future, because of decreased revenues and increased costs.

■ Albany holds a "visioning" workshop for the city's parks master plan. The workshop is intended to solicit public input on what people want and need in the parks over the next five to 10 years.

■ About 135 Albany residents protest a proposal to alter land-use requirements on Kains Avenue and Adams Street. The planning and zoning commission delays a decision to recommend the plan to the City Council.

■ A 1.5 acre property is bequeathed to El Cerrito for the property to be turned into a park upon the death of the woman who lives there. The property is located at Moeser Lane and King Drive.

■ The City Council agrees to let voters decide whether to keep the city's utility users tax. It later decides to place it on the November 2004 ballot.

■ Nine firefighters from the El Cerrito and Albany fire departments are sent to help battle the Southern California blazes: Capt. Larry Carr, Capt. Marvin Mears, engineer Rune Hoyer-Nielsen, firefighter David Garrett and Capt. Hugh Henderson from El Cerrito; and Capt. Dusty Wiggins, paramedic engineer Chris Sillers, paramedic/firefighter Brett Schlueter and Lt. Brad

Winding from Albany.

November

■ The Kensington Improvement Club holds a town hall meeting. Assemblywoman Ellen Tauscher speaks about Iraq and her recent trip there.

■ Residents come out against turning the Albany Temple into a pool hall at an Albany Planning Commission meeting.

■ Three civilians, five public safety employees and two public safety organizations are recognized for their heroic, life-saving actions during August's Moeser Lane truck crash. Awards are given out at an El Cerrito Council meeting.

■ The El Cerrito High School marching band invites alumni to march with them at the last home football game of the season.

■ By a 3-2 vote, the El Cerrito Council gives a 75-day extension for developer Charlie Oewel to find financing for his mixed-use project at the Del Norte BART

station.

■ The Albany School Board finds an extra \$1 million for the district's budget.

December

■ Letitia Moore becomes the Albany mayor.

■ El Cerrito opens a new play structure south side of El Cerrito Park.

■ The Albany City Board postpones voting on a controversial plan to rebuild El Cerrito High School and instead urges the work toward a consensus.

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What's the best way to handle defects?

Buyer may
seller with minor
requests, cause deal
canceled

INMAN NEWS

Buyers typically make
purchase offers contingent on
inspections. Depending on how the
written, the buyers may have
to withdraw from the pur-
chase without penalty if
inspections aren't satisfactory.
However, most buyers don't
know when they find out that the
house they're hoping to buy isn't

because it's rare to find
one that is completely free of
defects. Even new homes can have
problems if the building inspector
scrutinize the construction
too much or if building ma-
terials are defective. So most buy-
ers are faced with a decision about
whether to do when they discover de-
fects during the inspection process.
If new homes are usu-
ally more reliable to fix defects. Dur-
ing the construction process, there
are a lot of details that are

overlooked. It's not uncommon for
buyers to create a punch-list of
items that need to be completed
before the buyers take possession.

Dealing with inspection issues
on existing, or used, homes is a dif-
ferent story. Most home sellers don't
have a construction crew that can
take care of punch-list items. And,
many sellers aren't inclined to re-
pair defects that they have lived with
for years.

Some purchase contracts speci-
fically state that the seller is re-
sponsible for transferring the prop-
erty with all systems in working
order. In this case, the seller might
be obliged to repair certain defects,
like it or not. Otherwise, inspection-
related issues are often resolved
through negotiation.

HOUSE HUNTING: Buyers are
often successful in convincing a
seller to fix, or help fix, a problem
that no one knew about before the
inspections. The new information
could be an issue with any buyer.
Sellers may also be amenable to
repairing defects that relate to health
and safety issues, like a heater that
leaks carbon monoxide.

Getting too carried away with



DIAN HYMER
House Hunting

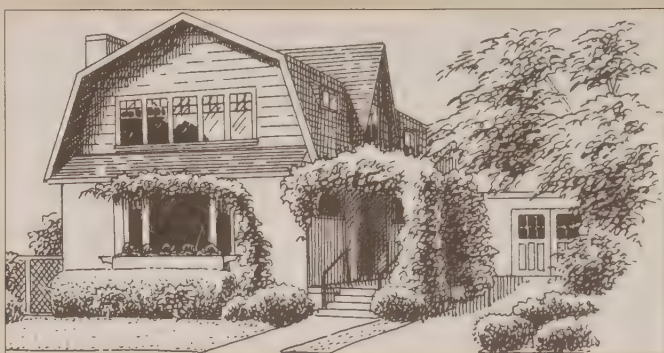
Most sellers don't
have a construction
crew that can take
care of punch-list
items. And,
many aren't inclined to
repair defects that they
have lived with for
years.

your requests can backfire. For in-
stance, appearing to nitpick by ask-
ing the seller to repair minor defects

See HYMER, Page B2

Real Estate Spotlight:

Piedmont two-story Dutch Colonial



BUILT IN 1920, this wonderful Dutch Colonial at 45 Wildwood Ave. in Piedmont features a spacious,
old-fashioned porch graced by beautiful lavender-blooming wisteria. The generous entry hall welcomes
you to the main level, with living room, formal dining room and a sunny, updated country kitchen with
a commodious pantry. Also on the main level are the laundry room and a full bath.

Gardens wrap around three sides of the house, and may be accessed from the kitchen through
French doors. Upstairs are three bedrooms, a full bath and an extra room.

Price: \$930,000.

Agent: Kathleen Callahan, Pacific Union, 510-338-1343.

Sales are up 15.7 percent compared to November 2002

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS

The median price of an existing
home in California in November in-
creased 17.8 percent and sales in-
creased 15.7 percent compared to
the same period a year ago, ac-
cording to the California Associa-
tion of Realtors (C.A.R.).

"The California housing market
continues to surge forward as we
approach the end of 2003," said
C.A.R. President Ann Pettijohn.
"Mortgage interest rates have
hovered below 6 percent — a boon to
the housing market under any cir-

cumstance, and a major factor con-
tributing to the record performance
thus far this year."

Closed escrow sales of existing,
single-family detached homes in
California totaled 627,190 in No-
vember at a seasonally adjusted an-
nualized rate, according to infor-
mation collected by C.A.R. from
more than 90 local Realtor associa-
tions statewide. Statewide home
resale activity increased 15.7 per-
cent from the 542,120 sales pace
recorded in November 2002.

The statewide sales figure rep-
resents what the total number of
homes sold during 2003 would be
if sales maintained the November
pace throughout the year. It is ad-
justed to account for seasonal fac-

tors that typically influence home
sales.

The median price of an existing,
single-family detached home in Cal-
ifornia during November 2003 was
\$386,760, a 17.8 percent increase
over the revised \$328,440 median
for November 2002. C.A.R. re-
ported. The November 2003 me-
dian price increased 1.7 percent
compared to a revised \$380,350
median price in October.

"The Southern California and
Central Valley real estate markets
were very strong last year, and 2003
has been no exception," said Leslie
Appleton-Young, C.A.R.'s vice pre-
sident and chief economist. "This
year, San Francisco Bay Area sales
are up dramatically compared to

Mortgage interest rates have hovered below 6
percent — a boon to the housing market under
any circumstance, and a major factor
contributing to the record performance thus far
this year.

Ann Pettijohn
California Association of Realtors President

the second half of last year, which
has propelled the statewide market
into record high sales territory over
the past few months."

Highlights of C.A.R.'s resale
housing figures for November 2003:
C.A.R.'s Unsold Inventory Index

for existing, single-family detached
homes in November 2003 was 2.3
months, compared to 3.1 months
for the same period a year ago. The
index indicates the number of

See REPORT, Page B2

Happy Holidays

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Report

FROM PAGE B1

months needed to deplete the supply of homes on the market at the current sales rate.

Thirty-year fixed mortgage interest rates averaged 5.93 percent during November 2003, down from 6.05 percent in November 2002, according to Freddie Mac. Adjustable mortgage interest rates averaged 3.75 percent in November 2003

HIGHEST PRICES

Statewide, the 10 cities and communities with the highest median home prices in California during November 2003 were:

- Los Altos, \$1,297,500
- Palos Verdes Estates, \$1,150,000
- Laguna Beach, \$1,130,000
- Malibu, \$1,125,000
- Beverly Hills, \$1,012,500
- Manhattan Beach, \$1,000,000
- Saratoga, \$913,250
- Rancho Palos Verdes, \$822,500
- Mill Valley, \$821,000
- Newport Beach, \$794,500.

GREATEST INCREASES

Statewide, the 10 cities and communities with the greatest median home price increases in November 2003 compared to the same period a year ago were:

- Palos Verdes Estates, 58.7 percent
- Desert Hot Springs, 54.6 percent
- Highland, 47.1 percent
- Gardena, 43.2 percent
- Santa Paula, 43.1 percent
- Placerville, 42.2 percent
- Malibu, 42 percent
- Glendale, 41.9 percent
- Dana Point, 41.9 percent
- Montclair, 40.6 percent.

compared to 4.14 percent in November 2002.

The median number of days it took to sell a single-family home was 27 days in November 2003, compared to 28 days (revised) for the same period a year ago. Regional sales data is not adjusted to account for seasonal factors that can influence home sales.

The MLS median price and sales data for detached homes is generated from a survey of more than 90 associations of Realtors throughout the state. MLS median price and sales data for condominiums is based on a survey of more than 60 associations.

The median price for both detached homes and condominiums represents closed escrow sales.

In a separate report covering more localized statistics generated by C.A.R. and DataQuick Information Systems, 92.5 percent or 356 of 385 cities and communities showed an increase in their respective median home prices from a year ago. DataQuick statistics are based on county records data rather than MLS information. DataQuick Information Systems is a subsidiary of Vancouver-based MacDonald, Detwiler and Associates.

Large changes in local median home prices typically indicate both local home price appreciation, and often, large shifts in the composition of housing market activity. Some of the variations in median home prices may be exaggerated due to compositional changes in housing demand.

The California Association of Realtors (www.car.org) is one of the largest state trade organizations in the United States, with more than 130,000 members dedicated to the advancement of professionalism in real estate. C.A.R. is headquartered in Los Angeles.

Best year on record for California housing market

■ Rapid price appreciation challenges first-time homebuyers, according to C.A.R.

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS

The California housing market is poised to finish 2003 by setting new records across the board for the second consecutive year, according to the recently released California Association of Realtors (C.A.R.) "State of the Housing Market 2003."

"The housing market in 2003 is on course to break several records that were set in 2002," said C.A.R. President Ann Pettigrew. "Sales of detached existing single-family homes are expected to exceed 2002's record-setting pace of 572,500 units, increasing 4.2 percent to 596,500 units this year. The median price will easily achieve a new high in 2003, reaching \$369,500, a 17 percent increase over 2002."

The market has benefited over the past two years from the lowest mortgage rates in more than a generation, according to C.A.R. economists. Moreover, strong demand relative to supply has contributed to significant increases in the median price as the state's population has grown by 600,000 people per year, while new home production has fallen short of statewide household growth by at least 40,000 units for the past several years.

Repeat buyers dominate

Repeat homebuyers, who accounted for 70 percent of home sales in 2003, have increasingly dominated the residential real estate market, according to the report. Their market share has climbed steadily since the mid-1990s, when repeat buyers represented 50 percent of all homebuyers.

"Because repeat buyers have reaped equity gains on the sale of previous homes in recent years, and have rolled most of those gains into the purchase of their next home, their home financing decisions have applied tremendous upward pressure on home prices," said C.A.R. Vice President and Chief Economist Leslie Appleton-Young.

Repeat homebuyers are primarily Baby Boomers in their peak income-producing years, who have a median age of 45 years and a median annual income of \$100,000, according to the report.

Low rates benefit first-time buyers

Comprising 30 percent of the market and with somewhat fewer

financial resources, first-time homebuyers have nevertheless been a force in the California housing market over the past year. Relying primarily on savings for their downpayment, and more likely to take out a second mortgage than repeat buyers, first-timers have taken advantage of the low interest rate environment.

"Instead of being discouraged by increasing home prices, many first-timers take a more positive alternative by purchasing more affordable units such as condos or townhomes that requires smaller downpayments and lower monthly mortgage payment than detached homes," Appleton-Young said.

First-time homebuyers have a median age of 33 years, earn a median household income of \$75,000, and typically are married, although just over one-third of first-timers are single.

First-timers also purchase a less expensive home than the statewide median (\$307,500 compared to \$375,000), and are more likely to view condominiums as a more affordable option — that one out of three first-timers take out a second mortgage to avoid paying private mortgage insurance (PMI).

"Yet despite the fact that there is a wider array of first-time homebuyer financing programs than ever before, first-time homebuyers as a share of all homebuyers have never been lower in the history of C.A.R. housing market research," Appleton-Young said. "With tight market conditions and repeat homebuyers driving the

See RECORD, Page B3

Hymer

FROM PAGE B1

can anger the seller to the point where he'd rather call the deal off and find another, more reasonable buyer.

You may find a seller more agreeable to helping correct defects if he doesn't actually have to complete the work by closing. For example, rather than asking the seller to replace the leaky shower at a cost of \$4,000, you could ask him to credit you this amount at closing.

With this approach, the seller pays to correct the defect, but you have the work done after closing. This relieves the seller of the hassle of having the work done. Also, there may not be enough time to have the work done by closing.

The buyer benefits from this approach because he can oversee the work to make sure that it's done

correctly. There's an additional advantage if you want to make changes during the construction project, or incorporate the repair into a larger remodeling project. Just make sure that the contractor who issued the bid to the seller will honor his price for you.

Instead of asking the seller for a credit, you could ask the seller to reduce the purchase price by an equivalent amount. If your property taxes are based on the purchase price, this approach might be preferable if you have enough of your own cash to pay for the repairs.

THE CLOSING: In either case, if you change the terms of the purchase contract, be sure to let your lender know before your mortgage documents are drawn. A price reduction or credit will have to be approved by the lender's underwriter.

Dian Hymer can be reached at 510-339-4777 or by e-mail at Dian@Dianhymer.com.

Checking out the Alameda County Food bank

Return to December 2003, Number 412 in a series of true experiences in real estate

We carried our bags of food into Safeway and lowered them into the food bank barrel, canned fruit and tomato sauce and boxes of cereal we'd brought from home. Already inside the barrel were packages of dry milk and turkey stuffing, canned cranberry and some tuna.

"It must be quite a job to deal with all that food," I said to Anet. "It all will have to be sorted before people who need it get it."

We began to talk and guess about trucks picking up the barrels and driving them to some central location. We wondered what happens to the food after that. Are the barrels dumped out in one place, roughly sorted by hand into cans and boxes, then each moved to a specific spot?

By shopping cart? Conveyor belt? Tuna and chipped beef together, or separate?

Do the people who get the food get to shop for what they need? Is it like shopping at a grocery store?

The more we imagined how the logistics of food distribution might be handled, the more we really wanted to know. A week later we were standing in an enormous warehouse in Oakland, part of the old Oakland Army Base, home of the Alameda County Community Food Bank.

Suzan Bateson, the director of the food bank, guided us, describing as we walked what we were seeing. What she told us is that it is all big: The operation, the quantity of food handled, the number of people in need.

This county food bank provides food assistance to more than 120,000 people every month. They do it with the considerable help of 300 local organizations that receive food from the bank to supplement donations they have received directly. These groups include food pantries, soup kitchens, churches — lots of people who either give foods for people to take home, or prepare and serve meals to the hungry.

It is in this warehouse that the collection barrels are taken. It is also where cases of food donated by various food companies go, and where boxes of fresh fruits and USDA foods purchased by the food bank are housed. Individuals needing food do not go to the warehouse themselves. Instead they go to one of the agencies.

The enormous job of organizing, moving, boxing, and distributing foods is accomplished by many volunteers, as well as 34 food bank employees.

There are no conveyor belts in the warehouse, just people moving food around with forklifts and carts.

Most of the foods placed in the food barrels are high quality and nutritious. Only a few items are not used: Homemade foods, partial containers, bulging cans and those without labels are discarded, as well as outdated baby formula and Ensure-type drinks. Pet food is given to the SPCA.

At this time of year when the food bank is getting food out quickly to so many for the holidays, items collected in barrels and by groups like the Boy Scouts are boxed up, filled about equally with a mix of canned and dry packaged items which are given to the 300 groups — 700 pounds to each.

They'll get, for instance, a lot of home-size packages and cans of macaroni and cheese, tuna, corn, beans and spaghetti. They

may also choose crackers and soda received as donations to the bank, as well as fresh fruit and packaged potatoes that the bank has purchased.

We were glad to hear that Children's Food Basket is a member agency because Anet and I have supported this nonprofit for some years. This fine group supplies young children with food to tide them and their families over the weekends. Bags of food are distributed to 1600 school kids every week in 25 Oakland elementary schools. Each bag contains six to eight ready-to-eat or simply made meals which — amazing to us — the Children's Food Basket is able to put together for an average cost of about \$1 each.

Member organizations that serve prepared meals to the hungry include the St. Vincent de Paul Free Dining Room and St. Mary's Center in Oakland and Dorothy Day House and the Berkeley Food and Housing Project in Berkeley — and many others.

We asked which foods are most prized, what we should best deposit in a food barrel? "Nutritious foods," Suzan Bateson told us. "Ones with a long shelf life. Rice and beans, peanut butter, tuna and fruits packed in water, dry milk, canned meats and vegetables."

We also wanted to know if the food bank would prefer cash to food donations? "Cash does go farther," Suzan told us. She explained that the bank can buy food for less than we can buy retail, even when we buy, say, peanut butter on sale two for the price of one. And foods that we donate are not entirely free to the food bank because the food must be handled and stored, in some cases delivered, and all of that costs money.

Anet and I have always felt strongly about donating real food stuffs, items that we were sure would be eaten by someone. Money gifts, it seems, are frequently gobbled up by administrative costs. But in this case, the overhead of the food bank is very low, only 6 percent of their budget. A remarkable 94 percent is given directly back to the community. Suzan runs a tight ship.

The bank is able, for example, to buy, store, and transport fresh oranges for only 6 cents per pound. Thirteen pounds of oranges for a dollar is very inexpensive. So, although in the future, Anet and I will still donate foods from home, we are also sending in checks, starting now.

The food bank needs all they can get. This year's holiday goal

At this time of year when the food bank is getting food out quickly to so many for the holidays, items collected in barrels and by groups like the Boy Scouts are boxed up, filled about equally with a mix of canned and dry packaged items which are given to the 300 groups — 700 pounds to each.

is \$800,000, but they are of that now having a little over \$100,000.

Suzan says that down this year will be rising. She is concerned the low volume of food right now and is hoping what the food bank will need when even more needed.

Most recipients are not earning enough to sufficient food. Some are in their jobs and are in either of these situations our own at some time needed.

"I think of donating vestment," she says. "I can withdraw from vestment at a food bank."

Checks can be sent to Alameda County Community Food Bank, PO Box 404, Land CA 94623 or check your organization.

Food barrels are sent until the end of the year, including Safeway and stores, and year-round California Federal Bank, Bowl, and the main Alameda. To volunteer warehouse, or to send food, call 510-834-0800.

Pat Talbot & Associates dental real estate sales reached at 510-834-0800 www.talbotandassociates.com

Save time with these painting pointers

DK BOOKS

The walls and ceilings throughout a home usually form the backdrop for room furnishings, drapes and other decorations. Choosing a color can be hard enough, but choosing the right kind of paint can be just as important.

Some prefer a water-based matte finish, others like something oil-based and glossy, while still some prefer a textured look. At a home center, it's easy to get overwhelmed

by aisle after aisle of equipment. Following hints for navigating through the paint options of "Decorating Ideas" by Julian Cassel and

Types of paint

No matter how many varieties there are, the

See PAINTING p. 10

2 New Listings



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First-time home buyers tend to paint, plant, refinish

BY ALAN J. HEAVENS
OF RIDDER NEWSPAPERS

house is perfect. Just take a look at the typical home-inspection report, and you'll see why.

For first-time home buyers, typically, the money going into the home is usually even more than for cash for a while after the first day.

More than half of first-time buyers, especially in older areas of the city, choose older, generally less expensive houses. But those who gravitate to newer townhouses, especially, are often motivated by financial reasons.

Most first-time buyers purchase homes that need some work, cosmetic or a gut job," said Genovese, a real estate agent with Hummer Associates. "They want the color of the walls, redo the floors or refinish, if the floors are old."

They also do window treatments, and, if they have gardens, they plant, she said.

During the first year, they are changing the house to their personality, Genovese said. "Those who purchase a new home or refinish, they add a few items to make it their own."

Pratt's first house was a two-bedroom house in Yardley, Pa., where she lived for 12 years.

When she did paint, it just had to be a color that would last throughout, so she painted in a color that she liked, Pratt said. "In the seven years I lived there, we painted all the bedrooms, plus 2½ bathrooms."

When she moved to her second house, in Paoli, Pa., where she lived for 12 years old but "was in a lot of interior maintenance," she said.

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ADDING ELECTRICAL OUTLETS to turn a basement into liveable space can be an early first-timers' expenditure

What do first-time buyers spend their money on in the first year? For Margaret Conway, who bought her house in Philadelphia three years ago, it was a lot of things.

"My partner and I installed a carbon-monoxide detector, painted the interior of the house, installed two ceiling fans, replaced faucets on a utility tub, caulked some of the windows, installed shelves in the basement and garage, made and installed a workstation for the laundry area, installed a new fluorescent light fixture in the basement, replaced the shower head and installed a gutter and a downspout on the Florida room," she said.

Among other things. We will not even talk about the honeysuckle and poison ivy they removed.

Painting is the No. 1 improvement by first-timers. Of course, that can be motivated more by taste than by necessity. A lot of buyers, first-time or otherwise, may buy a house despite the color of the walls, then head to the store as soon as the papers are signed.

Next on that to-do list: the water heater.

"In the first year, we repainted the master bedroom and kitchen and replaced the hot-water heater," said Robert Collella of Cherry Hill, N.J.

More storage is high on the list, as the Vitellos' experience indicates.

"In Year One, Don (a TV director/producer) built a gigantic closet in our mudroom," Juli Vitello said.

"Two years later, we added a large bathroom to our third floor and turned two rooms into a master suite."

There are never enough bathrooms, so even if first-time buyers are low on funds, the smart ones plan ahead.

"On the night we made our bid

on the house, we had a plumber in to determine if we would be able to add the third-floor bathroom when we could afford it," Juli Vitello said. "It was a big part of our decision."

Contractors who work with first-time home buyers tend to be teachers and hand-holders, as well, said John Fries.

"You've got to help them establish priorities," Fries, a Philadelphia contractor, said. "If they need to take care of the roof first before hiring you to make built-in bookcases, it is your job to tell them that."

They also tend to be rather innocent about things, so you have to work with them so they know how to establish priorities," he said.

Finding someone who has studied first-time homebuyers and their first-year activities is akin to searching for water in the desert.

But remodeling surveys by the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University and by the National Association of Home Builders do show how much first-timers spend. The figure is \$2,070 a year for first-time homebuyers under age 35, according to the Joint Center.

The amount spent by first-time buyers rises with income level, starting at \$2,050 for those earning less than \$40,000 and increasing to \$4,820 annually for people making \$120,000 or more.

American Express Co. compiles a retail index annually on home-improvement trends. The most frequently cited reason for making exterior and interior changes is "changes in personal taste."

Other major factors include mandatory maintenance (such as roof work), the need for more space and emergency repairs.

See FIRST-TIMERS, Page B4



LANDSCAPING is another way for first-timers to make their mark, even if it means just getting rid of those pesky weeds.

Mostly during the first year, (first-time home buyers) are changing the house to their personality. Those that purchase a new home or condominium just decorate with new furnishings or add a few items to make the place feel new.



PAINTING is an inexpensive way for first-time buyers to personalize their homes; prepping the outside can mean removing mold and mildew.

Painting

BY PAGE B2

range of broad categories. In general, water-based paints are the most popular because they're relatively easy to work with and dry quickly.

Latex paint is water-based and has a dull, matte finish. It is one of the more popular options because it's user-friendly and works with low odor. Flat paint is suitable for all walls and ceilings, especially those freshly plastered. It allows the plaster to dry thoroughly.

Flat latex is water-based, and it's easier to clean than traditional latex paint; it dries to a wipeable matte finish. It's also more suitable for all walls — the paint's matte properties help conceal many surface imperfections.

Gloss latex paint is water-based and quick-drying. It dries to a shine. The gloss finish makes cleaning easy, and makes the paint a good choice for kitchens and bathrooms. It also can be used for doors and ceilings.

Store-brand flat latex is a paint used by most major paint stores

and home-improvement stores — a brand exclusive to that store. This paint is an ideal choice for achieving a traditional flat paint finish on all interior surfaces.

Semigloss paint is oil-based and dries to a medium sheen. Although many brands are available, some have less of an odor, and are more user-friendly than others. This paint is particularly suitable for high-wear areas.

Quick-drying semigloss paint is a water-based acrylic type of semigloss. Typically a low-odor item, it also is washable and dries to a medium sheen. Some brands contain fungicides to fight mold and mildew buildup — making it another good choice for kitchens and bathrooms.

Textured paint is a water-based thick matte. It can be left plain or painted over, and can have a pattern superimposed. Textured paint is very durable and ideal for concealing surface imperfections and small cracks.

Measure twice

No matter which type of paint you choose, accuracy when estimating the amount you need will save you money and reduce waste. Calculate the surface area of walls

by multiplying the height of a room from the ceiling to the floor (or baseboard) by the entire length of the perimeter of the floor. Use the same dimensions to calculate the surface area of the ceiling. Do not subtract the areas of doors, windows and extras like molding, wail or window recesses, pillars and covered beams from your calculations. This way, you can be sure that you will have paint left over for any necessary touch ups later on. Also, remember that most walls will require two coats of paint.

Safety first

As with any home-improvement project, safety always should be the one of your first and foremost concerns. Here are some safety pointers to consider.

Prevent injury: Be sure to store painting materials and tools away from children and pets. Many products contain chemicals that may be harmful to the body.

Follow instructions: Read all manufacturers' guidelines with regard to proper use of materials and equipment before you begin your project.

Climb safely: Inspect all ladders and stepladders to make sure they are safe to use and show no serious signs of wear.



GREETINGS

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First-timers

FROM PAGE B3

If money were no object, project choices would include adding a room, building a porch or deck, completely rebuilding the house, putting on a new roof and installing a swimming pool, said American Express vice president Ronald Shultz.

Lowe's Cos. Inc. has not targeted first-timers for a survey,

If you don't anticipate being in your new home very long, don't overimprove or spend more than you could recoup when you sell. Make choices that will yield results that meet your own needs, and are consistent with upgrades in houses in your neighborhood.

spokeswoman Julie Valeant Yenichak said, but the chain does focus on inexpensive improvements that new homeowners might make.

These include hanging pictures, or hooking up washers and dryers or the cable-TV box, or fixing squeaky or sticking doors and drawers, and small plumbing problems that might not require a plumber.

"Before you start knocking down walls or tearing out tubs, consider how long you expect to live in this house," said Melissa Birdsong, Lowe's director of trend forecasting and design.

"If you don't anticipate being in your current home very long, be careful not to overimprove by spending more than you could recoup when you sell your home," she said. "Make choices that will yield results that not only meet your own needs, but that are also consistent with upgrades in other houses in your neighborhood."

The National Association of the Remodeling Industry in Alexandria, Va., has identified some common mistakes made by homeowners.

These include hiring the wrong contractor, selecting inferior products to save money, overextending on a do-it-yourself project, improper planning, not taking all choices into consideration, starting the project at the wrong time, not managing your budget and overimproving for the neighborhood.

Another mistake is "the domino effect" - installing a new kitchen, for instance, then deciding the living room looks shabby, and so on, until you break the budget.

Fries finds working with new homeowners rewarding for a variety of reasons.

"Most of all, it allows you to build a relationship of trust," he said. "In the long run, that means repeat business for you, and their recommending you to their friends."

Real estate market won't repeat 2003

BY JESSICA SWESEY
INMAN.COM

The housing party isn't entirely over yet, but economists and realty brokers alike now expect fewer corks to be popped next year.

Housing markets are still hot, but even typically optimistic Realtor groups now acknowledge the pace is set to cool from its historic highs. One sign of the anticipated trend line was that home sales declined in October for the first time in four months, according to the National Association of Realtors.

NAR reported existing home sales slipped 4.9 percent in October to a seasonally adjusted annualized rate of 6.35 million units. That pace was no small feat and was still well above last year's total home sales of 5.57 million. But the October pace was a drop-off compared with the record pace of 6.68 million set in September.

That one-month slip in sales could mark the beginning of the housing market's next cycle, which experts expect to be slower than the boom of recent years. Or the slip could be no more than a mere fluke because the previous three months each capped a record 6 million-unit pace.

Christopher Cagan, director of research and analytics at First American, said up-and-down variations in monthly home sales and prices are common and long-term interest rate fluctuations also can impact sales and pricing.

He cited California as one state where slightly higher mortgage interest rates appear to have spurred additional sales.

"In California, we have now-or-never buying. People say, 'I'd rather

buy now at 6 percent rather than buy later at 7 percent,'" he said.

Factors that argue for continued strength in the housing sector include those low interest rates, lean inventories of for-sale homes and high demand for housing among first-time home buyers and minorities. Those factors are aligned to fuel home sales into next year and perhaps beyond. But even so, no one expects next year's sales to outpace this year's.

NAR Chief Economist David Lereah believes October's slip in sales marked the start of a "soft landing for sky-high home prices." He expects 2003 will post the highest number of home sales on record at 6.07 million; 2004 sales then will cool from that boiling point to a still-strong 5.6 million.

Other factors that point to fewer home sales in 2004 include higher interest rates and continued uncertainties over job growth in many local markets, despite optimistic predictions from the White House. Those factors could cause some buyers to back down from the market next year.

Lereah expects interest rates on the 30-year fixed-rate mortgage to rise gradually from an average 5.9 percent this year to an average 6.5 percent in 2004. He expects 1.5 million jobs to be added to the economy next year.

Mike Sklarz, chief valuation officer for the Fidelity National Information Solutions unit of Fidelity National Financial, said every 1 percent increase in long-term interest rates triggers a predictable decrease in home sales activity.

That happens because some buyers face affordability problems

as interest rates rise. Higher rates means higher monthly mortgage payments and that can be a deal-breaker for buyers.

As the market changes, buyers also may be swayed by home price growth trends and predictions. If appreciation rates fall or even just flatten, some buyers could decide that buying a home isn't their best investment option.

Home sellers may face pricing problems as the market eases and price growth rates dampen. Home prices could continue to increase, but not at the same rate they've experienced over the last couple of years, Sklarz said.

Lereah expects the national median existing-home price to rise 9.1 percent to \$172,600 this year compared with last year and 4.7 percent next year compared with this year.

Home price growth increased 1.39 percent in the third quarter, the highest quarterly pace this year, according to the Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight. But price appreciation is at a year-over-year rate of 5.61 percent, the lowest increase in nearly four years. That's not to say home prices are declining, but rather that the market is changing and buyers may be less willing to enter bidding wars.

"It's becoming well-documented on a national basis," Sklarz said. And some local markets will see prices flatten, he added.

Some local markets saw longer days on the market in October. That also could be a sign of slowing demand or it could simply be typical end-of-the-year slower sales activity.

Get more real estate market predictions at www.inman.com

Teach your people

■ Providing financial education for employees can be beneficial for your business

Personal finances play a significant role in the level of work-related stress people experience. Most of us are taught how to "make money" but not how to effectively manage the income we earn.

As a result, poor spending habits and high levels of debt can derail the financial goals of many employees who often lack the knowledge and confidence to evaluate their own needs. In addition, many employees are unprepared to manage the 401(k) investments that will have an effect on their long-term financial security.

In a recent survey conducted by the Employee Benefit Research Institute, only 23 percent of the 1,000 employees surveyed said they received retirement investment advice through their place of employment.

But businesses are starting to recognize the importance of financial education and are now making it available to employees. Like wellness programs, day care assistance and other programs, financial education can be an important tool to motivate employees toward higher productivity and foster loyalty, as well as to assist employees in their retirement savings needs.

Today's employees usually expect their benefits package to include a retirement plan - they have almost become a necessity for attracting and retaining quality employees.

With the future of Social Security in question, people are worried about their financial security in retirement and need a simple tax-advantaged way to save.

By helping employees understand retirement and the available investments will be encouraged them to participate (in the plan)

However, just providing retirement plan does not completely solve the problem. Fortunately, some may be reluctant to participate in a retirement plan because they may not understand the value of participating or they may be unsure about the investment decisions. If they participate, employees often wonder how much they should invest and feel unsure about investment decisions. While offering an employer-sponsored retirement plan is a valuable first step, employees will probably need additional tools - and the financial education to use these tools - to meet their retirement needs. As a minimum, help employees understand the features of your retirement plan.

See GOUGH, Page B3

Looking toward the New Year

PREDICT**PROJECT**PROGNOSTICATE**
PROPHECY**FORETELL**FORECAST

The real estate market - it's like the weather. We know it's cyclical. Sometimes it's good and sometimes it's bad. We can try to predict or project. We can use statistics and look at the past.

But, just like the weather, sometimes we are surprised. In 2003, we've experienced a slow but definite improvement in the economy, an increase in employment and an improving stock market.

The year 2003 began with a record pace of home sales. We began with historically low interest rates that kept getting lower. There was plenty of inventory for buyers. Bidding wars were rarely seen. The previous sellers market did not become a buyers market. Let's just say the playing field was level.

We now have interest rates at 40-year lows and the housing market remained healthy, and many investors are choosing real property as their investment in the future.

As this column prints and the year 2003 ends, I offer to you some comments and forecasts from our 2004 real estate organization presidents.

Berkeley Association of Realtors 2003 President Todd Hodson: "The housing market for 2004 will remain stable. Prices in Berkeley will increase at a slower rate. Low interest refinancing will encourage people to stay put, therefore inventory is likely to be less. Affordability continues to be a concern, as less than 50 per-

cent of the people can afford a median price home." Oakland Association of Realtors 2003 President Don Dunning: "I predict 2004 will be another excellent year for real

See REID, Page B5



BOBBIE REID
Real Estate Writer

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Remodeled kitchens invite families to come together

BY MICHELE DERUS
MILWAUKEE JOURNAL

American homeowners are expected to spend \$214 billion this year on remodeling, to a large extent putting their money where the mouths are: in the kitchen. Whether life's stresses drove them to this age-old refuge or economics convinced them real estate is the safest investment bet these days, people are spending more time and money in the kitchen. In the process, they're transforming the once humble place into a point eerily similar to yesterday's living rooms - sometimes complete with fireplaces and comfy chair.

"The kitchen is the living room of the house," says Mark E. Glendene, president of the National Association of Remodeling Contractors (NAR). "It's the place where families gather, for eating, for entertaining, for everything," said Mark E. Glendene, president of the National Association of Remodeling Contractors (NAR). Among the touches his company, Glendene, Wis.-based B&E Remodeling Contractors Inc., puts in these days: "dramatic lighting, surround-sound systems,

appliances that look like pieces of furniture, paneled dishwashers, flat-screen TVs that are also computers."

All that is costly, but people are in an indulgent mood. The remodeling business is booming and kitchen jobs are its leading edge, said Gwen Biasi, marketing and communications coordinator at NARI headquarters in Des Plaines, Ill. Kitchens account for about 20 percent to 25 percent of all spending, "the most expensive room to remodel because of all the appliances and materials used," she said.

Especially the restaurant-quality appliances and luxury materials favored of late - marble, granite, copper, slate, brick, Italian tile, oak, maple and cherry wood. Customers are shelling out up to \$10,000 for minor update work, \$40,000 to \$60,000 on major renovations and twice that or more for remodeling projects that increase a home's square footage, remodelers estimate.

One sign of the white-hot popularity of kitchen renovations:

shopping, shopping, everywhere. And all that shopping has been a shot-in-the-arm to the ailing U.S. economy.

The \$131.5 billion spent in 2001 on home improvements, coupled with \$34.3 billion spent on maintenance and repairs and \$48.2 billion on rental properties, "was instrumental in preventing the economy from falling deeper into recession," the Harvard University Joint Center for Housing Studies reported this spring.

In a possible reflection of kitchens' added importance in today's world, the housing industry has bestowed new names on them. Home builders are apt to call them "hearth rooms," while remodeling contractors dub them "living centers."

The image of a "living center," conjured by Alan Freysinger, co-owner of Design Group Three Inc. in Glendale: "It may have a couple easy chairs, a conversation area. We just finished a project where the owner's dream was a fireplace in the kitchen, so she could read or do recipes by the fire."

aid

FROM PAGE B4

Over the years, buyers in other areas, such as San Francisco have discovered that a better place - Oakland. They continue to relocate here."

Alameda Association of Realtors 2003-2004 President Leticia Letizia: "According to the California Association of Realtors and Economist, Leslie Apple-Young, we can look forward to a favorable real estate market the next one to two years. Although I am hoping for better prospects in the employment rate, remember that a healthy housing

market is driving this economy."

Associated Real Property Brokers 2003-2004 President Betty Moore: "My forecast for 2004 is that the economy will continue as it is in now. With low interest rates, the housing inventory will increase and prices will stabilize, with a possible small decrease in price. Buyers are starting to get conscientious in regard to payments and the cost of owning a home."

According to the National Association of Realtors (NAR) home sales will continue to provide a strong foundation for the U.S. economy, as other sectors improve in 2004. NAR Chief Economist David Lereah predicts a re-

play of 2003 in the New Year. "With the economy improving, consumer confidence rising and jobs being created, a growing number of households will sustain strong housing demand. Only a modest rise in mortgage interest rates will slightly dampen the pace of home sales next year."

And my prediction? Well, call me a Pollyanna, if you will, but I'm looking forward to another great year. Here's wishing good health and prosperity to all of you, as we begin another new year. Happy 2004!

For information or comments e-mail me at bobbireid@mind-spring.com.

Gough

FROM PAGE B4

discuss general financial information and provide investment information. Also, asset allocation models and interactive investment materials may also be helpful in their retirement plan education.

In addition to helping your employees get the most from your company's plan, there are some reasons that may benefit your business. By helping employees understand the plan and the available investments, you will be encouraging them to participate. Also, if employees are less distracted by personal financial challenges, they will be more focused on their job and more satisfied.

Education has proved to be an effective way to help improve employees' ability to manage their finances. After receiving financial education, many employees are able to make better financial decisions and, perhaps more important, have greater confidence that they are making the right decisions. These factors should result in improved work performance, which will benefit both you and your business.

Leila Gough is an Associate Vice President with A. G. Edwards and Sons, member SIPC. She can be reached at (510) 452-8060.

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	Commercial w/4 retail stores large corner lot w/ high VISIBILITY & high TRAFFIC count. Currently, Café - Cleaners - Beauty Salon - One VACANT Owner Use? Plenty of off street parking. Call on this wonder! OAKLAND \$850,000
	VICTORIAN DUPLEX w/ 2BD lots on large lot Non-conforming detached 3rd unit used as of studio workshop. Also approved plans for two-story home in rear. Close to Transportation and Freeway. OAKLAND \$355,000
	Check this one out-2807 18A Circa 1912 Craftsman. Looks nice. \$21k Section 1 pest report. Rurified for 1st time!! Call today on this cutie!!! RICHMOND \$220,000
	3807 28A Charming w/ Amenities Gazebo Master Bedroom Suite. Walk to w/d carport. Fireplace in Living Room. 2 Car Garage, etc. Level and nicely landscaped front & rear yards. Peach, Apple & Asian Pear trees. Very quiet and private backyard. HERCULES \$449,000

ADDITIONAL PROPERTIES AVAILABLE - CALL TODAY!!!

Happy Holidays!

I'll see you in 2004
...Call me &
Gain the Advantage!

Anne Risk
Broker Associate

510.428.0900 • 510.869.4360
Office Voice Mail

www.prurealty.com/annerisk

RED OAK REALTY
www.redoakrealty.com

Happy Holidays!

By Appointment

	EMERYVILLE \$235,000 1/1 - Easy living condo for the active lifestyle with amenities galore. Courtyard views. New carpet, paint and fixtures. Best price per square foot in Watergate complex.
	BERKELEY \$649,000 Fourplex - Very good condition. Low pest. 2 one-bedroom units & 2 non-conforming studios. 3 units have been remodeled. Nice lot, great neighborhood.
	BERKELEY \$795,000 Duplex - Renovated, built in 1903. 3br/3ba owner's unit and 1bd/1ba apartment. Remodeled kitchens and baths, hardwood floors, all new systems, detached garage.
	RICHMOND \$397,000 2+1/3 - Light and bright townhome in Marina Bay. Six years new with vaulted ceilings & fireplace. Private, landscaped yard and two-car attached garage. More info at www.katieandmark.com .
	OAKLAND \$295,000 LOFT - Stunning loft in historic Calou building. Bold colors, skylight dome, exposed brick walls, remodeled kitchen & bath. Photos & more @ www.redoakrealty.com .
	OAKLAND \$425,000 Duplex - Unique building on an oversized lot with great potential! To be viewed with by appointment with listing agent only.
	RICHMOND - LAND \$90,000 Dramatic Bay and City views from 2,625 sq. ft. on a cul-de-sac. Country setting, quiet, private & serene but close to transportation, I-80, Wildcat Canyon & more!
	RICHMOND \$199,000 2/1 - Contractors special, fixer in transitioning neighborhood. Bring your tools and build equity.

1891 Solano Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94707 410.527.3387
2983 College Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94705 410.849.9990
2099 Pleasant Valley, Oakland, CA 94611 510.292.2000

YOUR COMPLETE REAL ESTATE RESOURCE.

publist 12/26/03

WEEKLY SALES

ALAMEDA

3154 Bali Ln - \$452,000
1633 Central Av - \$650,000
3324 Encinal Av - \$540,000
1076 Foster St - \$512,000
1812 High St - \$508,000
313 Lagunaria Ln - \$447,500
456 Lincoln Av - \$390,000
2840 Madison 125 - \$500,000
135 Maitland Dr - \$350,000
1069 Mangrove Ln - \$465,000
3477 Oleander Av - \$435,000
2025 Otis Dr - \$315,000
449 Pacific Av - \$450,000
615 Sand Hook Isle - \$647,000
753 Santa Clara Av - \$455,000
2101 Shoreline 204 - \$406,000
2101 Shoreline 460 - \$375,000
3286 Thompson - \$505,000

ALBANY

700 Carmel Av - \$361,000
912 Evelyn Av - \$319,000
621 Jackson St - \$475,000
535 Pierce 1203 - \$359,000
555 Pierce 1207 - \$249,000
545 Pierce 2202 - \$342,000
535 Pierce 3301 - \$355,000
707 Santa Fe - \$639,000
1046 Talbot Av - \$400,000
844 Talbot Av - \$680,000

BERKELEY

1845 Addison St - \$440,000
1590 Campus Dr - \$755,000
3110 Claremont Av - \$660,000
1109 Cowper St - \$512,000
901 Cragmont Av - \$1,037,000
1051 Creston Rd - \$750,000
2334 Curtis St - \$729,000
1439 Dwight Wy - \$350,000
1620 Dwight Wy - \$475,000
661 Euclid Av - \$900,000
1522 Fairview St - \$400,000
2414 Hilgard Av - \$480,000
768 Keeler Av - \$518,000
1018 Keith Av - \$660,000
1321 Ordway St - \$540,000
1229 Oxford St - \$815,000
1426 Parker St - \$495,000
2412 Sacramento - \$450,000
564 San Luis Rd - \$660,000
1406 San Pablo Av - \$419,000
828 Spruce St - \$1,382,500
735 The Alameda - \$975,000
1912 Virginia St - \$707,000

EL CERRITO

601 Bonnie Dr - \$260,000
605 Bonnie Dr - \$290,000
2308 Carquinez Av - \$550,000
6807 Central Av - \$535,000
1009 Contra Costa - \$700,000
6615 Cutting Bl - \$459,000
2709 Del Monte Av - \$695,000
1602 Elm St - \$434,000
7127 Eureka Av - \$456,000
614 Kearney St - \$350,000
1313 Noble Ct - \$469,000
841 Norvell St - \$480,000
2641 Tuller Av - \$507,500
420 Village Dr - \$555,000

EL SOBRANTE

882 Bridgeway Cr - \$580,000

911 Bridgeway Cr - \$575,000
114 Creekside Ct - \$263,000
23 Quail Hill Ln - \$340,000

EMERYVILLE

6363 Christie 2312 - \$307,000
6 Commodore C238 - \$260,000
8 Commodore C461 - \$262,000
5855 Horton 7802 - \$400,000

KENSINGTON

250 Colgate Av - \$602,000
4 Kensington Ct - \$855,000
274 Willamette Av - \$564,000

OAKLAND

1627 104th Av - \$290,000
1319 105th Av - \$309,000
917 107th Av - \$260,000
2380 108th Av - \$304,000
1506 26th Av - \$340,000
441 44th St - \$585,000
2175 48th Av - \$325,000
1429 50th Av - \$285,000
1309 54th Av - \$370,000
1009 54th St - \$360,000

2568 60th Av - \$300,000
2837 62nd Av - \$273,000
1800 68th Av - \$327,000
917 70th Av - \$308,000
1435 73rd Av - \$277,000
1821 73rd Av - \$290,000
1371 80th Av - \$248,000
3233 82nd Av - \$280,000
2268 85th Av - \$308,000
1160 86th Av - \$250,000
2026 90th Av - \$210,000
2470 90th Av - \$272,000
1214 94th Av - \$250,000
10735 Acalanes - \$274,000
2501 Adeline St - \$280,000
6007 Adeline St - \$450,000
1026 Aileen B - \$308,000
1063 Alcatraz Av - \$600,000
5909 Ayala Av - \$775,000
1026 B Aileen St - \$322,000
5336 Bancroft Av - \$300,000
3928 Bayo St - \$346,000
9403 Birch St - \$288,000
4532 Bond St - \$274,000
14010 B'way Tr - \$940,000
6982 B'way Tr - \$790,000
1703 Brush St - \$225,000
280 Caldecott 108 - \$303,000
2700 Carisbrook Dr - \$686,000

3300 Columbian Dr - \$465,000
3020 Curran Av - \$342,000
9127 Date St - \$315,000
3888 Delmont Av - \$400,000
2074 Drake Dr - \$625,000
932 East 11th St - \$350,000
1642 East 21st St - \$255,000
2832 East 23rd St - \$310,000
1950 East 24th St - \$377,000
2245 East 24th St - \$275,000
1543 East 31st St - \$280,000
1269 East 34th St - \$410,000
9859 Edes Av - \$250,000
6637 Exeter Dr - \$750,000
3608 Field St - \$382,500
2506 Foothill Bl - \$320,000
988 Franklin 1206 - \$380,000
321 Glendale Av - \$745,000
335 Glendale Av - \$685,000
322 Hanover 307 - \$310,000
2926 Harrison St - \$300,000
2655 Haverhill Dr - \$960,000
7107 Hemlock St - \$600,000
6401 Hillmont Dr - \$288,000
9320 Holly St - \$295,500
3037 Hyde St - \$419,000
482 Jean St - \$550,000
3369 Kiwanis St - \$579,000
2257 MacArthur Bl - \$360,000

2620 MacArthur Bl - \$305,000
2807 Madera Av - \$381,000
3367 Madera Av - \$405,000
1428 Madison 205 - \$193,000
4128 Market St - \$373,000
2744 Maxwell Wy - \$371,000
3335 Maybelle Wy - \$310,000
5182 Miles Av - \$600,000
6016 Monadnock Wy - \$290,000
323 Monte Vista 212 - \$315,000
2425 Monterey - \$566,000
7400 Mountain 12 - \$265,000
2733 Mountain Gate - \$725,000
2103 Myrtle St - \$280,000

4063 Norton
10924 Novato
3524 Oak Knoll
311 Oak St
311 Oak St
311 Oak St
4106 Oakmont
10823 Packer
10531 Packer
10600 Packer

SEE SALES

PLEASE REMEMBER

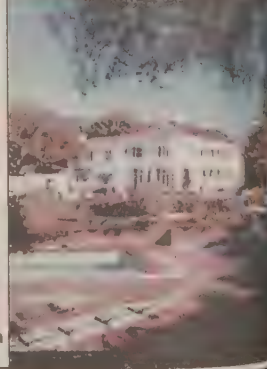
Real Estate Advertising Deadline

Space Reservations:
MONDAY, 12 Noon

Copy Requiring Typeset:
MONDAY, 5 pm

Copy & Artwork:
TUESDAY, 12 Noon

Order Home Guide:
WEDNESDAY, 12 Noon



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• WALNUT CREEK (925) 938-8484

OPEN 2-4:30

BY APPOINTMENT

BY APPOINTMENT

LAKE



145 BEVERLY

\$589,000
San Leandro. Spacious Broadmoor Estates craftsman with permitted additions. Four bedrooms, one and one half bathrooms. Large living room, formal dining room, three bedrooms with refinished hardwood floors. Large family room, laundry area downstairs, fourth bedroom upstairs. 10,000 sq. ft. lot with great backyard, fruit trees and with storage building. Must see.
Carol Robbiano 531-7000x292



5964 MARSHALL

\$265,000
North Oakland. New Listing! Conveniently located near shops & restaurants in Berkeley & Emeryville. 2 Bedrooms, plus room could be 3rd bedroom, formal dining, hwd floors, level yard. Needs work. As-Is sale.
Nancy Novick 531-7000x254



HIGH END CONSTRUCTION, BUILD BY ONE OF THE BEST! \$1,900,000
Claremont Hills. View, 4 bed, 3 bath, gourmet kitchen, lot next door available to buy as well. Open floor plan with vaulted ceilings, bright & sunny, wine cellar for your collection. Heidi Kearsley 531-7000x295



ADORABLE CAPE COD STYLE COTTAGE \$479,000
Alameda East End. Three bedrooms and two full bathrooms make this cottage special. Living room, dining room and excellent galley kitchen complete this charming home. Level yard, off street parking. Carol Robbiano 531-7000x292

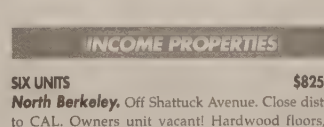


MOVE RIGHT IN!

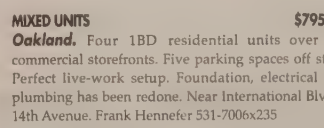
\$420,000
North Oakland. Best value in neighborhood. 3BD, 2BA, family room, living room, dining room, fireplace, hwd floors, 2-car garage, rear yard w/fruit trees, freshly painted. Must see! Frank Hennefer 531-7000x235



BEAUTIFUL BUILDING RIGHT DOWNTOWN \$349,000
2 bed, 2 baths, w/ loft room. Sunny outlook to courtyard. Private end unit, close to BART, Chinatown, Jack London, Farmers market on Fridays, come take a look. Heidi Kearsley 531-7000 x295



SIX UNITS \$825,000
North Berkeley. Off Shattuck Avenue. Close distance to CAL. Owners unit vacant! Hardwood floors, tile kitchen, good parking, top locale.
Frank Hennefer 531-7006x235



MIXED UNITS \$795,000
Oakland. Four 1BD residential units over two commercial storefronts. Five parking spaces off street. Perfect live-work setup. Foundation, electrical roof, plumbing has been redone. Near International Blvd. & 14th Avenue. Frank Hennefer 531-7006x235

EXCELLENT, LOW-EXPENSE, INCOME PROPERTY \$775,000

Alendale Park. Five 2BD/1BA units with garage. Coin-op laundry and additional storage area. Great condition with many upgrades. Current vacancies prepped for new owner's desired use.
Carlo Tamburrino 531-7006x279

GREAT VIEW LOT IN CLAREMONT HILLS
9100 Sq. Ft. upslope, beautiful view of city and above it all but close to Claremont. Shopping, shops, restaurants and easy access to Hwy 92. Heidi Kearsley 531-7000x295

TAHOE PROPERTIES

IMAGINE...THE PERFECT TAHOE HOME
Stunning great room w/ huge wood deck, eight foot glass doors leading to a large deck. Grand staircase off deck leads to a backyard, kitchen w/ granite counter tops, cabinets with lighting & chefs pantry. The cabinets have distressed hickory wood floors. Jim Plumbridge 800-858-2463

DELIGHTFUL EASY LIVING
This charming Agate Bay home features a living area with enough space for a home office, dining area. Kitchen has tile throughout w/ appliances. Oversized 2-car garage. www.ahomes.com too. Pat Lucas or Carla Werner 800-858-2463

RIDGEWOOD HIGHLANDS CHALET
Three bedrooms plus loft, two bathrooms, open floor plan, & great location in neighborhood. Close to Tahoe City and potential. Carrie Tolar & Jim Plumbridge

The first map shows the northern Sacramento Valley, including Redding, Susanville, Chester, Reno, Carson City, and Sacramento. Red Bluff is marked with a circled 48, Chico with a circled 5, and Oroville with a circled 31. Distances are indicated along the routes.

The second map shows the San Francisco Bay Area, including Vacaville, Fairfield, Cordelia, and Suisun City. Vacaville is marked with a circled 120, Fairfield with a circled 49, Cordelia with a circled 110, and Suisun City with a circled 109. Other locations like Eureka, Ukiah, and Eureka are also shown.

The third map shows the Roseville Galleria area, including Highway 65, Sunset Blvd, and Standard Ranch Rd. The Roseville Galleria is marked with a circled 65.

SAN RAMON

Windemere
From the \$400,000s to the \$900,000s. Family-oriented master-planned community with 10 neighborhoods to choose from. Outstanding amenities include more than 1150 acres of open space, trails, parks, excellent schools, library & more! Close to freeways, employers & BART. To get information call 650.550.0000 or visit the website at www.windemere.com

Gale Ranch
From the low \$500,000s. 14 beautiful models to tour at 4 communities with 3 neighborhoods opening soon Villapaseo 3 & 4 bd up to approx 1802 sf Coronado 3-5 bd up to approx 2763 sf Monarch, 5 bd up to approx 3013 sf Summit Bridge 4-5 bd up to approx 6980 sf located just 1.5 mi east of I-680 on

Shelbourne
From the low \$400,000s. MODELS NOW OPEN!
Shelbourne at Windemere features elegant lowhome-style
condominiums. 2, 3 & 4 BR. 1,200 to 1,800 sq. ft. Attached parking.

STOCKTON
Blossom Ranch

Blossum Ranch
From the mid \$200,000s. Preview Opening! Affordable single family homes offer 4 to 6 bedrooms with up to 2505 sq ft. Open Sat-Sun 10am to 5pm Weekdays 11am to 4pm Closed Thursday 209-477-5453 www.award-homes.com

SUISUN
The Classics at Petersen Ranch

The Classics at Peterson Ranch
Priced from the mid \$300,000s. Six new elegant plans
1581 to 2830 sq ft. 3 and 4 bedrooms, some w/detached
garages. Easy commute. Forecast Homes: 707-432-0166. Open
daily.

From the low \$300,000s. Award Homes newest community of affordable single-family homes. 3 & 4 bedrooms up to 1828 sq ft. These well-designed floor plans have many amenities and upgraded features. Loft options are available in some plans. Take Eleventh Street exit off the 205 Hwy Turn left on Lammers Road Rt on Fabian Road and left onto Montgomery Lane. Follow signs

Madison Park
From the low \$300,000s. Family homes with approx. 2156 to 2396 sq ft, up to 4 bedrooms. Open daily 209-832-2480
Warrington Homes California Hwy 205 exit 11th St. Right on

Edgewood
Coming Soon. 3-5 bedrooms • 1550 to 2500 sq ft 888-773-7371 www.ryland.com

2-3 bath single family homes 1804 to 2516 sq ft Tracy - From 205 east 11th Street, right on Corral Hollow right on Golden Leaf Lane left on Carol Ann Drive 888-291-9009 ryland.com

Junction
Coming Soon. 3-5 bedrooms • 1775 to 2298 sq ft 888-261-4510 www.ryland.com

Quail Run
From the mid \$300,000s 4 and 5 bedroom single-family homes in prestigious west Tracy. Elegant appointments, up to 2410 sq ft. Great location: easy commute to the Tri-Valley. To find Quail Run, take the Eleventh Street exit off the 205 freeway. Turn left on Jammers Road; right on Fabian Road and follow signs to the models. Open Fri thru Tues. 10-5, Thurs 11-5. Award Homes.

Mountain House
Priced from the low \$400,000s. Spectacular new home town-planned with the best of yesterday and brightest of tomorrow in mind. Now showing the first 7 new neighborhoods of this masterplan featuring 3 to 5 bedroom homes from 1817 to 4051 sq. ft. www.mountainhouse.net

VACAVILLE

19 Canterfield - Final Release
Priced from mid \$400,000's. Homes range from 2044 to 3022 sq ft. Home designs on 8 000 to 10 000 sq ft lots with 3-4 bedrooms, bonus room, den and oversized 2 car garages (per

20 Woodcreek and Heritage
From the low \$400,000s to high \$600,000s. Famous
Forecast Homes quality in an elegant new neighborhood near
excellent schools, shopping and restaurants. Easy commute!

21 Hampton Park
From \$301,000 Phase 3 release. Coming Soon! Active Adult Community - Grand Opening. Leisure Town's newest

active adult community. All single story from 1349 to 1620 sq ft.
2 & 3 bedrooms. Open 9-5. Closed Tues/Wed. Take Leisure
Town, rt on Sequoia, left on Yellowstone, rt on Bryce Way
Silverwing Development, Aaron Coombs 707-469-8383

From the mid \$400,000s: Hiddenbrooke in Vallejo w/golf course, clubhouse, trails & open space • Fairway Villas Model Grand Opening! 4 courtyard home designs, 1981 to 2244 sq. ft. from the high \$300 000s. Call 888-413-8800 • The Knolls Final Release Only a few English Cottage-style homes left from the mid \$400,000s 707-554-655 See floor plans and elevations at www.visithiddenbrooke.com Coming in 2004 Reflections by

24 Terrace Park
From the low \$200,000s. **NEW RELEASE** now available!
Distinctive collection of townhome-style condominium homes. 2 & 4 BR, 1-2.5 BA, indoor laundry 779-1796 sq. ft. and up to 500 sq. ft. backyards. Close to shopping & restaurants with easy

Sycamore Place
From the mid \$300,000s. 1ST SALES RELEASE JAN 10TH. Sycamore Place single-family detached homes in dynamic downtown area. Approx 1404 to 2403 sq ft. Close to

shopping restaurants Solano County Fairgrounds, Six Flags
Marine World plus convenient access to Hwy 80, SF Ferry and
Napa Valley Sales Information Center open Jan. 10th. Call 707-
648-1533 www.wphi.com Western Pacific Housing

WALNUT CREEK

Walnut Creek Sunny Cove

Walnut Creek-Sunny Cove
From the mid \$700,000s. Tour our models today! 4-5 bedrooms, 2428 to 2571 sq. ft. Great layouts including downstairs master suites and dens, and upstairs lofts. Close to downtown, BART, 680 and Highway 24. Open daily 11-5. 1634 Sunnyvale Ave. off N Main St. Walnut Creek. Delco Builders & Developers 925-935-6833 www.delcobuilders.com

Sales

FROM PAGE B6

3763 Ruby St - \$273,000
6945 Saroni Dr - \$553,000
4921 Scotia Av - \$475,000
2446 Siesta Ln - \$235,000
2465 Siesta Ln - \$235,000
9359 Skyline Bl #B - \$655,000
13800 Skyline Bl - \$1,025,000
8227 Skyline Cr - \$860,000
6969 Snake Rd - \$759,500
7219 Spencer St - \$320,000
7831 Sunkist Dr - \$575,000
4225 Suter St - \$300,000
4272 Terrabella Wy - \$897,000
6224 Thornhill Dr - \$580,000
10615 Topanga Dr - \$150,000
7520 Valentine St - \$445,000
6144 Valley View - \$610,000
3401 Victor Av - \$555,000
7 Villanova Dr - \$525,000
3635 Virden Av - \$655,000
10457 West Ct - \$167,000
5934 Zinn Dr - \$619,000

PIEDMONT

11 Cambridge Wy - \$721,000
1691 Grand Av - \$853,000
361 La Salle Av - \$1,260,000
1131 Oakland Av - \$1,105,000

RICHMOND

126 13th St - \$255,000
150 16th St - \$215,000
618 20th St - \$400,000
335 21st St - \$305,000
613 30th St - \$386,500
657 30th St - \$315,000
622 36th St - \$390,000
5907 Alameda - \$442,000
636 Amador St - \$405,000
1401 Bissell Av - \$595,000
6309 Bonita Ct - \$540,000
739 Boyd Av - \$330,000
1201 Brickyard 412D - \$572,000
225 Chanslor Av - \$255,000
3128 Clinton Av - \$380,000
4017 Coleman Ct - \$546,000
5229 Columbia Av - \$304,000
116 Commodore Dr - \$383,000
3410 Garvin Av - \$275,000
2513 Groveview Dr - \$907,500
449 Lucas Av - \$246,500
688 McLaughlin St - \$400,000
1205 Melville Sq 404 - \$262,000
3733 Morningside Dr - \$575,000
1312 Pelican Wy - \$925,000
219 South 3rd St - \$225,000
700 South 41st St - \$392,000
150 South 7th St - \$300,000
134 South Marina Wy - \$226,000
1854 Truman St - \$291,000
101 Waterview Dr - \$620,000

4465 Whitecliff Wy - \$380,000

SAH LEANDRO

1221 136th Av - \$380,000
1615 141st Av - \$420,000
1573 151st Av - \$350,000
1621 151st Av - \$349,000
1675 151st Av - \$375,000
1550 Bancroft 411 - \$370,000
589 Beatrice St - \$353,000
708 Biltmore St - \$607,000
2333 Cherry St - \$362,000
15395 Churchill St - \$401,500
16618 Cowell St - \$475,000
1073 Duzmal Av - \$470,000
15187 Endicott St - \$354,000
14806 Farnsworth - \$407,000
1636 Graff Av - \$593,000
14686 Hanover St - \$404,000
71 Harlan St - \$397,500
847 Lafayette Av - \$390,000
13445 Menlo St - \$366,000
15073 Milford St - \$425,000
15515 Montreal St - \$380,000
15208 Norton St - \$445,000
1933 Orchard Av - \$375,000
14582 Outrigger Dr - \$310,000
14642 Outrigger Dr - \$300,000
13933 Santiago Rd - \$424,500

See SALES, Page B9

MORTGAGE RATES

15 YEAR FIXED		30 YEAR FIXED		5/1 ADJUSTABLE
RATE	APR	RATE	APR	RATE
5.25%	5.28%	5.87%	5.89%	5.125%***



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*5.26% estimated annual percentage rate is based on \$322,700 loan amount. Applicable closing costs will apply. Loan term is for 15 years.
**5.89% estimated annual percentage rate is based on \$322,700 loan amount. Applicable closing costs will apply. Loan term is for 30 years.
***4.409% estimated annual percentage rate is based on \$500,000 loan amount. Applicable closing costs will apply. 5/1 Adjustable ARM rate every year thereafter. Estimated payment is \$2,722. Homeowner's insurance is required.

Above programs are based on primary, single family residences, townhouses, and condominiums only. No prepayment penalty, require restrictions may apply. All credit applications are subject to credit qualifications and underwriting requirements. Rates as of December 22, 2003.

Real Estate

Holiday

Display Advertising Deadlines
for

Friday, Jan. 2nd

Space Reservation: Friday, Dec. 26 - 10 am
Copy Deadline: Monday, Dec. 29 - 10 am

Friday

OPEN HOME GUIDE - In-Column Ads

Tuesday, Dec. 30th - 11:00 am

Happy Holidays

Real Estate Advertising Dept.

Kris Maples	510-262-2799
Joyce Thompson	510-748-1688
Rachelle Whitfield	510-262-2740
Emily Wallace	510-262-2755
MJ Brandenberger	925-952-2630

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WEEKEND OPEN HOMES

Open Sunday, unless otherwise indicated

www.contracostimes.com

Alameda				Oakland			
\$295,000	2133 Santa Clara #211	2BD	510-521-1277	\$259,000	330 Parkview Terrace #107	1BD/1BA	510-499-7852
Open Sun 2-4:30				Open Sun 1-4			
Bayside Real Estate			Nissa Dash	Alameda Realty			Alan Gill
\$485,000	1401 Chestnut	2BD/1.5BA	510-986-9458	\$425,000	2818 Best Ave.	3BD/1.25BA	510-339-4700
Open Sun 2-4:30				Sun. 2-4:30	Maxwell Park		
Prudential CA Realty	Laura Levy/Allison Austin			Coldwell Banker		Reva Tolbert	
\$495,000	1017 Doris Ct.	3BD	510-521-1508	\$462,500	1024 Wood St.	5BD/2BA	510-814-4706
Open Sat & Sun 2-4:30				Open Sat & Sun 2-4			
Bayside Real Estate	Colleen McFerrin			Harbor Bay Realty		Kathleen Hirsch	
\$580,000	2441 Otis Dr	3+BD/2BA	510-748-1148	\$625,000	6666 Sobrante	4BD/2.5BA	510-339-4700
Open Sun 2-4				Sun. 2-4:30	Montclair		
Gallagher & Lindsey	Pacita Dimacali			Coldwell Banker		Preston Grant	
Castro Valley							
\$729,000	2540 San Carlos	3BD/2BA	510-821-4040	\$700,000	68 Wildwood Avenue	3BD/2BA	510-339-4700
Open Sun 1-4				Sun. 2-4:30	Piedmont		
Alameda Realty	Chris Price			Coldwell Banker		Carol Brown	
				\$1,450,000	23 White Ct.	4BD/3BA	510-339-9900 x214
				Sun. 1-5			
				C21 Heritage Real Estate		Don Pettey	

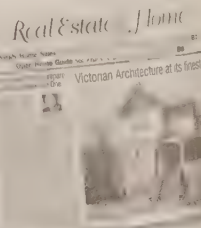
Where

Is your dream home?

Real Estate & Home, every Friday

HILLS NEWSPAPERS

THE BERKELEY VOICE • THE JOURNAL • THE MONTCLARION
THE PIEDMONT • ALAMEDA JOURNAL



What do

need to be
haute?

Shopping Plus

Look inside for local advertising circulation

Tate cuisine: beyond
the bologna sandwich

From haute cuisine to haute couture, Shopping Plus every Friday.

HILLS NEWSPAPERS

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es

PAGE 88

Stokes Av - \$440,000
Tombas Av - \$445,000
Warren Av - \$600,000
W. Willow Av - \$400,000
W. Yaffe Dr - \$475,000

LORENZO

Weather Ln - \$495,000
Hesperian Bl - \$372,500
Sharon St - \$350,000
via Amigos - \$430,000
via Buena Vista - \$389,000
via Jacqua - \$285,000
via Tovita - \$389,000

the numbers

EMERYVILLE

TOTAL SALES: 18
LOWEST PRICE: \$315,000
HIGHEST PRICE: \$650,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$466,806

EMERYVILLE

TOTAL SALES: 10
LOWEST PRICE: \$249,000
HIGHEST PRICE: \$680,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$417,900

EMERYVILLE

TOTAL SALES: 23
LOWEST PRICE: \$350,000
HIGHEST PRICE: \$1,382,500

MEDIAN PRICE: \$660,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$656,935

EL CERRILLO

TOTAL SALES: 14
LOWEST PRICE: \$260,000
HIGHEST PRICE: \$700,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$481,464

EL CERRILLO

TOTAL SALES: 4
LOWEST PRICE: \$263,000
HIGHEST PRICE: \$580,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$439,500

EMERYVILLE

TOTAL SALES: 4
LOWEST PRICE: \$260,000
HIGHEST PRICE: \$400,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$307,250

KENSINGTON

TOTAL SALES: 3
LOWEST PRICE: \$564,000
HIGHEST PRICE: \$855,000
MEDIAN PRICE: \$602,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$673,667

OAKLAND

TOTAL SALES: 116
LOWEST PRICE: \$150,000
HIGHEST PRICE: \$1,025,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$417,453

PIEDMONT

TOTAL SALES: 4

LOWEST PRICE: \$721,000
HIGHEST PRICE: \$1,260,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$984,750

RICHMOND

TOTAL SALES: 32
LOWEST PRICE: \$215,000
HIGHEST PRICE: \$925,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$388,859

SAN LEANDRO

TOTAL SALES: 31
LOWEST PRICE: \$300,000
HIGHEST PRICE: \$607,000
MEDIAN PRICE: \$400,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$414,306

SAN LORENZO

TOTAL SALES: 7
LOWEST PRICE: \$285,000
HIGHEST PRICE: \$495,000
MEDIAN PRICE: \$389,000
AVERAGE PRICE: \$387,214

This list is provided by California Resource, a real estate information company that obtains the information from the County Recorder's Office. Neither California Resource nor this newspaper guarantees the completeness or accuracy of the information. All questions should be directed to CalResource@aol.com. Call 209-365-6663.

MAISON NOUVEAU

Real Estate Services



www.MaisonNouveauRealty.com

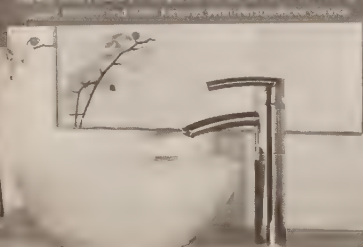
2% Commission

2701 College Ave. 510 849 9900

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Los Angeles Square Bath Gallery



510.832.2284
www.losangelesbathgallery.com
40 MONTEFLORE LANE, 1st FLOOR, LOS ANGELES, CA 90024
30 WESTERN STREET, SUITE 100, OAKLAND, CA 94607



Happy New Year

MANY THANKS TO MY GREAT CLIENTS
AND TO MY FELLOW AGENTS.
WISHING YOU THE BEST AND MORE IN 2004



FRITZ HOCHFELLNER

Guiding You to the Best in Life

WWW.FRITZSELLSHOMES.COM
FRITZ HOCHFELLNER, REALTOR-ASSOCIATE
DIRECT LINE: 510.338.1348



For an Unbeatable Home Equity Line

Apply for a Bank of Alameda Home Equity Line of Credit for \$250,000 or less, before February 15th, 2004 and enjoy an Initial rate of only

3.75% APR*

for the first year.

To apply today, please call:
Ana Long 510-748-8905 or
Kathy Shaughnessy 510-748-8916

(Offer applies to new borrowers only)

rate of 3.75% APR is valid for an introductory period which is based on Prime Rate, plus 0.00% currently 4.00%. Features: automatic payment from a Bank of Alameda deposit account; otherwise it will become Prime Rate, plus 0.50% after the introductory period. Prime Rate is based on the Wall Street Journal Prime Rate, and can vary monthly. Maximum APR is 15.00%. Rates and terms for owner-occupied single family residences, with LTV's up to 80% are subject to change without notice. *APR is annual rate.

www.BankofAlameda.com



CONTRA COSTA TIMES MORTGAGE GUIDE

Market Indicator*
Last wk 5.750
This wk 5.500

www.mtginform.com/cct

Advertisement Information by INFOTRAK National Data Services

COMPANY	Loan Product		Loan Product		Loan Product		Loan Product		Rates as of 12/22/03	
	Rate/Points	APR/Lock	Rate/Points	APR/Lock	Rate/Points	APR/Lock	Rate/Points	APR/Lock	COMMENTS	
Matrix Investment Corp. 800-366-8916 DOCH 0130418 Fees=\$1831	30-yr Fixed 5.000 5.232	1.880 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.250 5.406	1.890 30	15-yr Fixed 4.250 4.716	1.880 30	30-yr Fixed 0 Pts 5.375 5.481	0.000 30	Good & Bad Credit Considered Brokers welcome! Great Commercial Loans! visit us at www.matrxinvestmentcorp.com	
Mortgage Broker Assoc. 877-987-7700 DRE# 01116614 Fees=\$2277	30-yr Fixed call ...		30-yr Fxd Jumbo call ...		3/1 ARM call ...		3/1 ARM Jumbo call ...		NO Income/NO Assets/NO Job? - YES NO Money Down/NO Closing Costs? - YES All types of Credit? - YES	
Mortgage Center USA 800-840-5588 DOCH 00881816 Fees=\$1770	30-yr Fixed 5.125 5.420	2.000 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.250 5.610	2.000 30	15-yr Fixed 4.375 4.720	2.000 30	10-yr Int Only ARM 3.125 3.230	0.000 30	5/1 3.500 2pts 3.770 APR WOW! INT ONLY NO COST LOANS E Bay Offices 800-840-5588 Purchase and Refinance Specialist	
Mortgage Market 800-837-5626 DRE# 00887562 Fees=\$1875	30-yr Fixed 5.500 5.590	0.000 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.750 5.842	0.000 30	15-yr Fixed 4.875 5.020	0.000 30	5/1 ARM Jumbo 4.875 3.872	0.000 30	Credit problems, bankruptcy, off call loans our specialty. all gov't loans. 100% loans credit lines construction	
National Financial Corp. 510-818-9966 DRE# 965926 Fees=\$1600	30-yr Fixed 5.625 5.758	0.000 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.875 6.023	0.000 30	3/1 ARM Jumbo 4.000 4.047	0.000 30	5/1 ARM Jumbo 4.625 4.719	0.000 30	Fast approval on Purchase loan Easy qualify. Call for FREE pre-approval ask us about our purchase special!	
Northern Mutual Corp. 888-441-2600 DRE# 01243581 Fees=\$2348	30-yr Fixed call ...		30-yr Fxd Jumbo call ...		6 month ARM call ...				WOW! NO ADD-ON FOR JUMBO LOANS! No-Pont loans are available! (3yr.ppt) E-mail Steve@northernmutual.com	
Omni Funding Services 800-303-8887 DRE# 01183958 Fees=\$2051	30-yr Fixed 5.500 5.725	1.500 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.750 5.926	1.500 30	15-yr Fixed 4.750 5.124	1.500 30	5/1 ARM 4.250 4.459	1.500 30	www.24hourloancenter.com Check out our web site for more rates! We are committed to EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE!	
Pacific West Financial 800-798-7334 DRE# 01124581 Fees=\$1694	30-yr Fixed 5.625 5.729	0.000 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.875 5.921	0.000 30	5/1 ARM Jumbo 4.625 4.667	0.000 30	5/25 ARM 4.500 4.598	0.000 30	Se Habla Espanol! 100% purchase/Credit problems OK Interest Only Loans/BK OK	
Premier Mortgage Group 888-389-6633 DOCH 4130386 Fees=\$1992	30-yr Fixed 5.375 5.435	0.000 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.625 5.653	0.000 30	3/1 ARM 3.000 3.705	0.000 30	5/1 ARM 4.000 3.958	0.000 30	Get rates online at www.pmgmortgage.com Purchase specialist-we get loans closed! Great Jumbo & Interest Only programs.	
Santelli & Associates 800-516-0656 DRE# 00545983 Fees=\$1745	30-yr Fixed 5.500 5.592	0.000 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.875 5.915	0.000 30	3/1 ARM 3.750 3.833	0.000 25	30-yr ARM* 1.950* 4.759	30	OPEN WEEKENDS 10 POINTS - 0 COSTS avail INTEREST ONLY/0 DOWN PMT/full index/4.67 APPLY ONLINE AT www.loanpartnerwork.com	
Saratoga Bancorp 800-935-6286 DRE# 01220326 Fees=\$1893	30-yr Fixed 5.625 5.680	0.000 45	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.875 5.900	0.000 45	15-yr Fixed 5.000 5.080	0.000 45	5/1 ARM 4.625 4.350	0.000 45	Loan for all credit grades! No income Check Loans. No upfront Fees Purh/Refi to 100%. Sarlatto Bancorp.com	
SF Pacific Mtge. Consult. 415-567-5525 DRE 01243287 Fees=\$1695	30-yr Fixed 5.500 5.542	0.000 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.750 5.771	0.000 30	Jumbo 5/6 10/10 4.250 4.269	0.000 30	Jumbo 6 mo 10/10 2.750 2.768	0.000 30	Expert Real Estate Advice! Local SF Bay Area Broker *5 yr int only period, Labor indexed	
A American Resid. Land. 800-568-8470 DRE# 4130340 Fees=\$1624	30-yr Fixed 5.375 5.592	0.000 45	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.625 5.665	0.000 45	15-yr Fixed 4.750 4.903	0.000 45	3/1 ARM* 1.250 1.310	0.000 45	Refi, purchase or consolidate now! Free Approval! No Doc Loans "pot neg am M-F 7:00-9:00 Sat-Sun 7:00-5:00	
A Superior Mortgage 800-591-4446 DRE# 01351704 Fees=\$1889	30-yr Fixed 5.500 5.670	0.000 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.750 5.990	0.000 30	15-yr Fixed 4.750 4.990	0.000 30	5/1 ARM Jumbo 4.875 5.090	0.000 30	Open weekends. Credit problems OK "Apply online at www.superior-mtg.net	
AAA Mortgage 888-821-6200 DRE# 01098146 Fees=\$1695	30-yr Fixed 5.375 5.430	0.000 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.625 5.730	0.000 30	15-yr Fixed 4.750 4.840	0.000 30	3/1 ARM 3.500 3.670	0.000 30	OPEN WEEKENDS 888.821.6200 CREDIT PROBLEMS OK WWW.AAALENDER.COM	
AccessBanc Mortgage 800-661-2765 DOCH 00892684 Fees=\$1430	30-yr Fixed 5.500 5.562	0.000 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.750 5.781	0.000 30	3/1 ARM Jumbo 3.875 3.754	0.000 30	5/1 ARM Jumbo 4.375 3.854	0.000 30	7/1 Jumbo ARM 5.250% apr 4.413% 1month ARM 1% start rate, apr 3.194% Prepay & other restrictions may apply	
AlmLoan.com 888-411-4246 DRE# 01235124 Fees=\$2400	30-yr Fixed 5.500 5.614	0.125 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.625 5.666	0.000 30	15-yr Fixed 4.625 4.833	0.250 30	7/1 ARM Jumbo 5.000 4.529	0.250 30	Apply and lock online 24/7. Open Sat, and Sun, from 9am to 2pm. Rates and Fees Posted Online Daily	
Amerisave Mortgage Corp. 866-514-7283 DOCH 6038592 Fees=\$1223	30-yr Fixed 5.375 5.588	0.000 40	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.625 5.746	0.000 40	3/1 ARM 3.000 3.989	0.000 40	15-yr Fixed 4.750 5.101	0.000 40	Best Rates & Lowest Fees Guaranteed or pay \$300! Visit www.amerisave.com for rates "APR includes origination fee	
Bank of America 877-68-FIXED Fees=\$1806	30-yr Fixed 5.375 5.549	1.000 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.500 5.671	1.000 30	15-yr Fixed 4.750 5.024	1.000 30	6 Mo Interest Only 2.625 2.728	1.000 30	100% Financing Available - Fast Closings No Cost for Appraisal - Refinance Today! Low/Moderate income Programs Available	
Bank of America Mortgage 925-688-3760 Fees=\$1406	30-yr Fixed 5.750 5.866	0.254 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.875 5.987	0.132 30	6 month ARM 3.250 3.341	0.054 30	3/1 ARM 4.250 3.948	0.164 30	"Purchase only Call for refinance Rates Let us help you obtain your down payment	
BayCal Financial Corp. 408-719-6800 DRE# 01169696 Fees=\$1704	30-yr Fixed 5.250 5.473	1.250 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.500 5.662	1.250 30	5/1 ARM Jmb IO 4.500 4.546	0.000 30	3/1 ARM Jumbo 3.625 3.544	0.000 30	100% Home Financing Programs up to 1 MIL Interest Only to 2 MIL, 6 MOS, 3/1, 5/1 180 Days Lock NEW Construction Home PUR	
California Mtge. Advisors 888-CAL-REFI x000 DRE# 01170868 Fees=\$1992	30-yr Fixed 5.500 5.590	0.000 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.875 5.915	0.000 30	3/1 ARM Jumbo 4.125 4.161	0.000 30	5/1 ARM Jumbo 4.625 4.662	0.000 30	DIRECT LENDER LOANS TO 10 MILLION WWW.CALMTG.COM	
Cal-State Funding 800-883-5633 DRE# 00874441 Fees=\$2010	30-yr Fixed 5.625 5.860	0.000 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.875 5.910	0.000 30	5/1 ARM Jumbo 5.125 5.180	0.000 30	3/1 ARM Jumbo 4.500 4.540	0.000 30	Cal-State Funding CAN fund your loan. Rates change daily, call for latest rates. We are here to satisfy your needs.	
CMG Mortgage Services 800-958-5339 DRE# 01170028 Fees=\$1433	30-yr Fixed 5.250 5.437	1.375 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.625 5.756	1.125 30	3/1 ARM Jumbo 3.500 3.636	1.375 30	5/1 ARM Jumbo 4.125 4.234	1.000 30	Open Sat & Sun. Quik Qualifier & stated income option available. Financing for people with less than perfect credit.	
Custom Mortgage Solutions 800-259-9510 DOCH 6038994 Fees=\$1146	30-yr Fixed 5.250 5.427	0.625 35	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.625 5.766	0.750 35	15-yr Fixed 4.625 4.905	0.500 35	CODI 30 yr ARM 1.950*, 0.000 4.890	0.000 60	Purchase, Refinance or Cashout. CODI COFI, COSI. Open 7 Days. *Potential Neg-Am.	
ditech.com 800-395-1376 DOCH 8132004 Fees=\$1890	30-yr Fixed 5.125 5.422	2.000 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.500 5.749	2.000 30	15-yr Fixed 4.375 4.872	2.000 30	15-yr Fixed ARM 5.000 5.399	2.000 30	Apply online at www.ditech.com -Your mortgage solution Delivered!	
Downey Savings & Loan 800-798-2148 DOCH 60037471 Fees=\$1428	30-yr Fixed 5.375 5.527	1.375 60	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.625 5.789	1.625 60	1-mo COFI ARM* 1.250 4.591	1.000 45			Direct lender! 45 yrs experience, fixed & adjust rate mgs. "Pot. neg amort." Apply online at www.downeysavings.com	
eSource Mortgage, Inc. 888-221-9787 DOCH 6038477 Fees=\$1352	30-yr Fixed 5.125 5.360	1.875 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.375 5.520	2.000 30	15-yr Fixed 4.250 4.440	2.000 30	1-yr ARM* 1.250 3.340	0.000 60	Low rates with NO POINTS ALSO NO CLOSING COSTS Avail. "Pot neg am Pics. online at www.lendia.com	
First Blackhawk Financial 800-798-MARY DRE# 01144055 Fees=\$1986	30-yr Fixed 5.500 5.590	0.000 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.750 5.789	0.000 30	5/1 ARM Jumbo 4.625 4.711	0.000 30	10/1 ARM 5.500 5.539	0.000 30	JUMBO AND SUPER JUMBO SPECIALIST FAST APPROVALS, 0 POINT 0 FEE LOANS Call 7days wk mlight@firstblckhawk.com	
Golden Horizon Mortgage 877-414-8280 DRE# 01316954 Fees=\$1652	30-yr Fixed 5.250 5.501	2.000 30	30-yr Fxd Jumbo 5.875 5.908	0.000 30	15-yr Fixed 4.375 4.613	2.000 30	5/1 ARM Jumbo 4.375 4.405	0.000 30	OPEN WEEKENDS FAST & EZ APPROVAL, CASH OUT 100% PURCHASE PROGRAMS NO APPLICATION FEE 877-414-8280 or WWW.CALFIRSTLENDING.COM	
Imperial Mortgage 800-961-2274 DRE# 01039832 Fees=\$1453	30-yr Fixed call ...		30-yr Fxd Jumbo call ...		15-yr Fixed call ...		5/1 ARM Jumbo call ...		BUT WILL BE "LURED IN" BY LOW QUOTES! CALL ME FOR A HONEST LOCKABLE RATE CLOSE IN 30 DAYS OR APPRAISAL IS FREE!!!!!!	

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To place your ad, call 748-1667

Or 1-800-733-9393

Call Tom to 6pm, Monday - Friday

To place an ad in person visit the Alameda Journal at 1516 Oak Street, Alameda

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4th Week FREE

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Merchandise & Transportation

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\$1640+ 8 Lines, Friday Only

All Hills

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Additional Lines \$2.05 each

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All print party ads are prepared, checks and major credit cards accepted

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Ad Starting: Tuesday

Open House Guide

Friday

*Cancellations same as deadlines

*For copy deadline 1 hour prior to publication

1516 Oak Street, Alameda (Real Estate Fax 748-1666)

Quickly locate the category you need with this handy Classified guide

Table with 10 columns: ANNOUNCEMENTS, PERSONAL SERVICES, EMPLOYMENT, PETS & SERVICES, MERCHANDISE, FINANCIAL, HOME IMPROVEMENT, RENTALS, REAL ESTATE, TRANSPORTATION. Each column contains a link to the category on ContraCostaTimes.com.

Real Estate & Home

Real Estate



Real Estate Information & Announcements

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It is illegal for companies doing business by phone to promise you a loan and ask you to pay for it before they deliver. This is a public service announcement of the Federal Trade Commission and Contra Costa Newspapers/Hills Newspapers.

Lots & Land Residential

LIVERMORE: Vineyard, 16-20 acs in prestigious Crane Ridge Estates. Agt. Mike Ahern 925-525-6875

Condos & Townhouses for Sale

DUBLIN: New Listing! 7511 Oxford Cir., off 7511 Creek, Attractive Woodlands, 280 condo w/finic. Custom shutters. Open Sun 1-4 \$413,000 925-462-2885 www.vintagerealty.com

Antioch

480/288A Fresh paint, corner, 2350 sq ft, 3 bdrms, 2 1/2 baths, 2 fireplaces, 2 car garage. Call 925-233-7737

Bay Point

280, nice, art. area, lowest price in area \$244,950. Open Sat-Sun 1-4:30. 81 Delta Dr. Agt 925-980-8450

Brentwood

480/218A, 1995, 2 yrs. new, indisp., FSD. \$379,999 925-516-3745

El Cerrito

480/218A, 1995, 2 yrs. new, indisp., FSD. \$379,999 925-516-3745

Martinez

"The Castle" Alhambra Valley Contra Costa's Best Four Bedroom A pristine setting, this custom European style home sits on over 1 acre, features 4000+ sq ft of old world craftsmanship thru out of wood beams, plank floors, tile and picturesque views. The courtyard entrance is a masterpiece of design and landscaping. The home is a true gem, a place where you can truly relax and enjoy life. Call 925-977-1001

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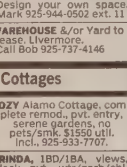
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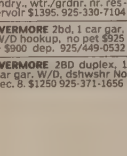
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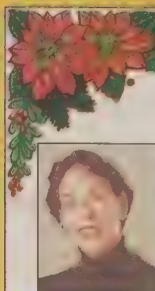
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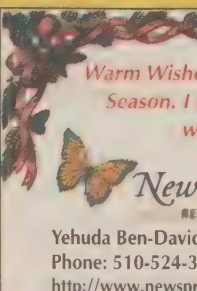
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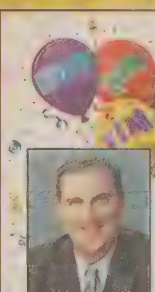
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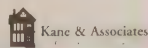
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Anita Wong

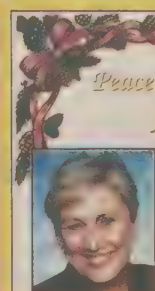
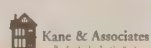
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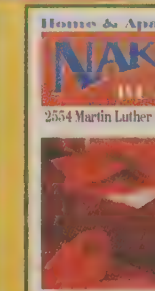
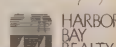
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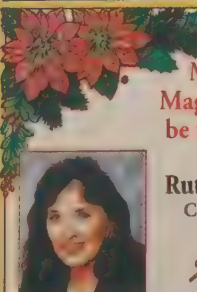
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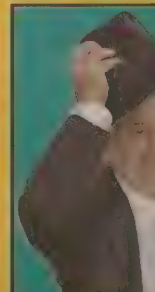
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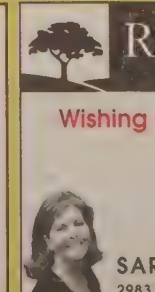
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SPORTS

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Section C

El Cerrito in a zone in Arizona tourney

Gauchos capture the consolation final in their season at the Nike Tournament of Champions

STAFF REPORT
El Cerrito High School (5-2) double-doubles from outside Wilder and Ashley Green converted an off-rebound for the winning shot in a TOC consolation game Friday in Chandler, Ariz., on Thursday.

Wilder led El Cerrito with 16 points and pulled down 12 rebounds. Jackson had 14 points and 10 rebounds to go along with three steals.

Cerrito 47, Highlands Ranch, Colo. 46: The Gauchos' Green converted an off-rebound for the winning shot in a TOC consolation game Friday in Chandler, Ariz., on Thursday. Green finished with a team-high 11 points and added five rebounds, four assists and three steals. Chazny Morris had 10 points and nine rebounds, and Ashley Jackson had 14 points and 10 rebounds for the Gauchos.

Hart-Newhall 63, El Cerrito

52: The Indians (8-2) took a 19-12 lead in the first quarter on their way to a first-round TOC win Thursday.

"We got a real slow start. They don't have a shot clock here, so the girls did exceptionally well playing defense as long as they did," El Cerrito coach Ron Williams said.

Jordan McCormick paced El Cerrito (3-2) with 21 points.

Berkeley 51, Mater Dei Santa Ana 50: The Yellow Jackets (6-3) outscored Mater Dei 27-22 in the second half, and that was good enough to eke out a win in the Nike TOC White Division on Saturday. Guard Joy White led the Yellow Jackets with 13 points, while Alexandria Mitchell and Andrea Keys finished with 11.

Berkeley 51, Sylmar 40: Paced by Brittany Moore's nine second-half points, the Yellow Jackets rallied in the second half for a victory over their Southern California opponent in the first round of the Nike TOC on Thursday.

Berkeley (5-2) trailed 27-17 at halftime of this Black Division game before producing a comeback. Moore finished with a game-high 15 points.

PREP ROUNDUP

"We had a very slow first half and came back strong in the second half to beat them," Berkeley co-coach Gene Nakamura said.

BOYS BASKETBALL
Mt. Diablo 60, Albany 50: The Red Devils turned up the defensive pressure and turned back the Cougars on Friday night.

The Red Devils forced turnovers on five straight possessions midway through the fourth quarter and pulled away from the home team late.

Mt. Diablo (4-1) was relentless defensively all night, causing 22 Albany turnovers.

Albany coach Doug Kagawa said his team has been struggling with its ballhandling.

"We have had some pretty sporadic play from our guards, and that's been hurting us," he said.

Also hurting the Cougars (3-6) was the lights-out shooting of Red Devil forward Anthony Flagg, who finished with a game-high 19 points, scored 14 points in the first quarter, three on 3-point shots. Mt. Diablo was up 20-10 at the end of the quarter and never trailed thereafter.

The Cougars did have a run left in them, however. Led by center Brandon Hinchey, Albany battled back from a 28-22 halftime deficit to pull even at 35-35 with 3:03 left in the third quarter.

But consecutive hoops by Josh Temple and Max Nelson gave Mt. Diablo a lead it would never relinquish.

The Red Devils also dominated the game from the outside, hitting eight 3-pointers, compared with one for Albany by sophomore Eddie Izumizaki.

The difference was Mt. Diablo's defense, which held Albany without a bucket during the middle four minutes of the fourth quarter. The Red Devils stole the ball three times, forced a pair of bad passes, then pressured Albany into a backcourt 10-second violation.

Albany was able to control the rebounding battle as Hinchey and Arash Riahi combined to grab 17 boards.

Richmond 44, Albany 25: The visiting Oilers (2-3) outscored the Cougars (3-5) 24-8 in the second half on their way to the non-league victory Thursday.

See ROUNDUP, Page 2



ARASH RIAHI puts up a shot over Mt. Diablo's James Sheehan (40) and Antonio Flagg in Albany's 10-point loss to the Red Devils.

Experienced Gauchos keep improving

With 19 years of varsity experience between five players, El Cerrito has a wealth of knowledge

By Phil Jensen
STAFF WRITER

The El Cerrito High School basketball team won five of its first seven this season, but the result isn't very surprising considering the team's senior depth.

Senior players have played on varsity teams for four years, and another senior is a three-year varsity player for the Gauchos.

As part of the tremendous experience that El Cerrito has this season,

we can probably go one month with 12 on just about most nights (one game), El Cerrito coach Williams said.

Jordan McCormick, Marqueta Green, Rosezetta Reed and Jessa Stallworth are all four-year varsity players, and Ashley Jackson has played on El Cerrito's varsity team for three years.

They were all willing to play, and that's the important part, said Williams about those seniors. "Last year, they were together as a nucleus."

El Cerrito finished 20-8 last season and advanced to the North Section Division III quarterfinals. This season, the Gauchos have beat teams such as Highlands Ranch, Colo., and

"We have not played our best basketball by any stretch of the imagination. The main thing is that our defense has not come together."

— El Cerrito coach Ron Williams

Westview, Ariz. Their only two losses entering this week's action were against Petaluma and Hart-Newhall.

But the Gauchos can improve in all areas, according to Williams before the Nike Tournament of Champions last week.

"We have not played our best basketball by any stretch of the imagination," he said. "The main thing is that our defense has not come together."

El Cerrito outscored its opponents in its first four games this season by an average score of 67-43.

Green produced quite a feat against Jesse Bethel-Vallejo. In the Dec. 9 game, the point guard had a quadruple double with 14 points, 10 assists, 10 steals and 10 rebounds.

That is the first time that has happened for a team Williams has coached in his 18 years as a boys and girls coach at the varsity and junior varsity level. This is his fifth season as El Cerrito girls varsity basketball coach.



SENIOR GUARD Marqueta Green had a quadruple double (14 points, 10 assists, 10 steals, 10 rebounds) in a game against Jesse Bethel on Dec. 9.

Berkeley captures second place at Yuba City tourney

By Phil Jensen
STAFF WRITER

The Berkeley boys basketball team won two out of three games in the Melvin H. White Classic last week at Yuba City before losing the championship game.

"We made strides. In the two games we played really well," Berkeley coach Mike Williams said.

The Yellow Jackets opened the season with a 69-66 win over Tokay-

Lodi, then defeated Yuba City 53-38. In the championship game, Sheldon Sacramento beat Berkeley 84-69 behind 26 points from Duke-bound DeMarcus Nelson.

"They were up 13 at the half. We missed a lot of easy shots and defensively, we lost focus in the first half," Gragnani said. "In a couple of defensive possessions (near the end of the game), we did not finish and that cost us."

ACCAL NOTEBOOK

Shaun Burl and Jack McSweeney were named all-tournament for the Yellow Jackets. Burl scored a team-high 14 points in the first-round win over Tokay. McSweeney had 11 rebounds against Yuba City and 13 points against Sheldon.

"Jack did it all — he rebounded, scored, defended well," Gragnani said.

Berkeley's Dior Lowhorn, a transfer from Riordan-San Francisco, scored 11 points against Yuba City and 21 points against Sheldon, but Lowhorn was not at 100-percent health after missing the Berkeley Classic tournament with a back injury, Gragnani said.

"He's got a back injury that if he gets it warm, it's O.K., but if it stiffens up, it's a problem," Gragnani said.

The Yellow Jackets will be

competing in the Don Barnbauer tournament at Marin Catholic starting today.

TOURNEY-TOUGH: Berkeley, El Cerrito and Pinole Valley had successful runs in tournaments last week.

The Yellow Jackets and Gauchos both won two of their three games in the Nike TOC in Arizona. Berkeley was in the Black Division, and El Cerrito

See ACCAL, Page 2

New coach is looking for an attitude adjustment at Albany

By Orlando Molina
STAFF WRITER

With a new coach at the helm, the Albany High School girls basketball team is looking to turn a few losses and climb its way back to respectability in the Bay Area Athletic League.

Albany's chief button-pusher, Wallace takes over as coach for the girls' junior varsity girls. He turned a 3-18 team into a 22-5 contender, and he's having no time trying to instill

a winning attitude into this year's Cougars.

"They've been losing for the last several years and we have to change the attitude," Wallace said. "A lot of these girls have been losing since they got into high school."

The Cougars suffered through a tough 3-10 BSAL season (9-12 overall) last year. Wallace attributed that to the team's lack of conditioning. He said this year's Cougars will be in better physical shape and put a major emphasis on run-

BSAL NOTEBOOK

ning in fall.

He added that if the team can concentrate on being in basketball shape to start the preseason, then that will free up time for the players to focus on fundamentals.

His theory has already been put to the test as the Cougars have accumulated a 4-3 record to start the week.

"We could easily be 5-2, we're very competitive, and

playing better," he said. "I'm happy with where we're at."

Wallace said the team will be tested early and he was true to his word as it played the likes of Berkeley and Oakland Tech, both resulting in losses. The Cougars did rebound with a 53-13 win over St. Helena on Dec. 18. However, Wallace thought the 53-38 performance against Oakland Tech on Dec. 16 was more impressive.

"It was an impressive loss," he said. "Yeah we lost by 15 but they played so well. The

team got some confidence and can play with anybody."

With Piedmont, St. Mary's and St. Patrick a lock for the top three spots in the BSAL to many, Wallace is predicting a major fight for fourth place and has no trouble seeing Albany in that position.

"We're a contender for fourth place if we do what we need to do," he said. "I think we can upset somebody in the top three."

See BSAL, Page 2

PREP DIGEST

AHS coach bolts for St. Mary's

By Bill Kolb
STAFF WRITER

Talk about a quick turnaround.

Jon Segall tendered his resignation from his position as the Albany High School girls volleyball coach last Thursday. By Friday he had already agreed to take over the program at Bay Shore Athletic League rival St. Mary's.

"I don't waste time," Segall said.

Segall led the Cougars to BSAL titles in each of his three years at the helm. He compiled an impressive 38-1 league record, with the one loss coming against St. Joseph in 2003.

He said that his departure is entirely without acrimony, and that the decision was based on what he felt was right for the returning players at Albany as well as for himself.

"I felt that the girls at Albany would be happier with a different kind of coach," Segall said. "My departure is not acrimonious. Albany has great parents and an outstanding administration. And the kids are nice kids. There are no hard feelings on my part."

He added that he was excited about the task ahead at St. Mary's.

"They have a great core of kids," Segall said. "They really want badly to win, and I think they need a coach to put them over the top. I really like the attitudes of the kids, and I have a really good feeling from the administration. I'm excited."

The Panthers finished 10-3 in the BSAL in 2003 behind Albany and St. Joseph (12-1).

Segall replaces Justin Caraway, who took over the Panthers program a year ago after four seasons at Berkeley.

"Justin did a fine job for us," St. Mary's girls athletic director Denis Mohun said. "We're fortunate to pick up Jon. You look at his record — he's a well established coach. We're excited about the way he's able to interact with the athletes, the parents and the administration."

FOOTBALL

Pinole Valley High School football and track star Wopamo Osaisai orally committed to attend Stanford on a full athletic scholarship.

Osaisai said that it is a scholarship for football, but he also will run track.

The 5-foot-11½, 190-pound cornerback took an official visit to Stanford the first weekend in December.

"I enjoyed my time at Stanford. That's where I really want to be," Osaisai said.

Osaisai said he also took an official visit to UCLA in November for track. He also considered Washington, Arizona, and UCLA

See DIGEST, Page 2

ON DECK

Prep girls basketball

■ **West Coast Jamboree**, Saturday, Monday and Tuesday—A couple local teams will be participating in this 81-team, 10-bracket tournament. Berkeley will face Long Beach Poly in first-round Diamond Division action 7 p.m. Saturday at Diablo Valley College. In the Topaz Division, El Cerrito matches up with Vanden-Travis AFB at 2:30 p.m. Saturday at Freedom.

■ **St. Mary's at Archbishop Mitty Classic**, Monday through Wednesday, San Jose, TBA — The Panthers will travel to a tournament featuring traditionally-tough Mitty.

Prep boys basketball

■ **Berkeley in Don Bambauer tournament**, Saturday, Monday and Tuesday, Marin Catholic, TBA — The Yellow Jackets, who have advanced to the tournament finals of two straight tournaments, open play tomorrow in this potentially tough tourney.

Prep girls soccer

■ **Berkeley in Tri-Valley Tournament**, Thursday through Jan. 3, TBA — The Yellow Jackets open play in the Maroon Division against Las Lomas at 5 p.m. Thursday at Acalanes.

Stars of the week

■ **Larry Gurganious**, St. Mary's boys basketball — Gurganious scored a game-high 26 points and added 13 rebounds in the Panthers' 83-57 win over Cardinal Newman. He also scored 12 points in St. Mary's 58-44 victory over Tamalpais.

■ **Marqueta Green**, El Cerrito girls basketball — Green averaged 10 points per game in three Nike TOC Red Division games, including 11 points in El Cerrito's 60-41 win over Westview, Ariz., in the consolation final.

■ **Joy White**, Berkeley girls basketball — White averaged nearly 10 points a game as the Yellow Jackets won two of their three games in the Nike TOC Black Division. White scored 13 points in Berkeley's 51-50 win over Mater Dei-Santa Ana.

WEST COAST JAMBOREE

PREP GIRLS

West Coast Jamboree

DIAMOND DIVISION
Saturday, Dec. 27
All games at Diablo Valley College
San Diego vs. St. Mary's 2:30 p.m.
La Jolla Country Day vs. Oakland Tech, 4 p.m.
Mary Bertram (NYC) vs. Laguna Creek-Erik Grove, 5:30 p.m.

EMERALD DIVISION
Saturday, Dec. 27
All games at Carondelet HS
Vallejo vs. Washington-Fremont, 4 p.m.
Chico vs. Amador Valley, 5:30 p.m.
Pinole Valley vs. Carondelet, 7 p.m.
Edison-Fresno vs. Acalanes, 8:30 p.m.

RUBY DIVISION
Saturday, Dec. 27
All games at Pittsburg HS
Washington-S.F. vs. Fairfield, 4 p.m.
Merced vs. Oakland, 5:30 p.m.
Mt. Eden vs. Pittsburg, 7 p.m.
Folsom vs. Monte Vista, 8:30 p.m.

OPAL DIVISION
Saturday, Dec. 27
Highlands-North Highlands vs. Fremont-Oakland, at DVC, 1 p.m.
Valley Christian-San Jose vs. Mira Loma-Sacramento, at Freedom HS, 4 p.m.
Mission Bay-San Diego vs. Eureka at Freedom HS, 8:30 p.m.

PEARL DIVISION
Saturday, Dec. 27
All games at Clayton Valley HS
Benicia vs. Northgate, 4 p.m.
American-Fremont vs. Burbank-Sacramento, 5:30 p.m.
Leland-San Jose vs. Clayton Valley, 7 p.m.
Ukiah vs. Napa, 8:30 p.m.

TOPAZ DIVISION
Saturday, Dec. 27
All games at Freedom HS
Kennedy vs. Moraga-Catholics, 1 p.m.
Vanden-Travis AFB vs. El Cerrito, 2:30 p.m.
Hogan-Vallejo vs. Campolindo, 5:30 a.m.
St. Elizabeth vs. Freedom, 7 p.m.

SAPPHIRE DIVISION
Saturday, Dec. 27
All games at Deer Valley HS
Rio Linda vs. Castlemon, 4 p.m.
Piedmont Hills-Alto vs. Sheldon-Sacramento 5:30 p.m.

JADE DIVISION
Saturday, Dec. 27
All games at Ygnacio Valley HS
Oakmont-Roseville vs. Dublin, 4 p.m.
Hercules vs. St. Patrick, 5:30 p.m.
Jesse Bethel-Vallejo vs. Ygnacio Valley, 7 p.m.
Chowchilla vs. Breaan Christian, 8:30 p.m.

ONYX DIVISION
Saturday, Dec. 27
Rio Vista vs. De Anza, at Clayton Valley HS, 1 p.m.
Bakers-S.F. vs. Foothill-Sacramento, at Clayton Valley HS, 2:30 p.m.
Gonzales vs. Rincon Valley Christian-Santa Rosa at Mt. Diablo HS, 4 p.m.

CARNET DIVISION
Saturday, Dec. 27
All games at Mt. Diablo HS
Leadership-S.F. vs. Richmond, 1 p.m.
Sonoma Academy-Santa Rosa vs. Mission-S.F., 2:30 p.m.
Downville vs. Mt. Diablo, 7 p.m.
Samuel Hancock-Stockton vs. Bentley, 8:20 p.m.

Digest

FROM PAGE 1

before choosing the Cardinal. Osaisai was a starting cornerback and kick returner for Pinole Valley this season, and he also played wide receiver and running back.

In track, he was a California Interscholastic Federation state finalist in the 100 and 200 meters last season.

BOYS SOCCER

Richmond soccer star Juan Cardenas made an oral commitment to attend Cal on an partial athletic scholarship.

The midfielder made official visits to USF, St. Mary's and Cal. He was impressed with the facilities at Cal and the diverse campus.

"If you get an education at Cal, you are set," he said. Cardenas scored four goals and has one assist in his first eight games this season.

BRIEFS

Advanced skills baseball clinic

All Pro Baseball Academy will be holding an advanced skills hitting and fielding clinic for ages 11-18 Dec. 29-30 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at San Pablo Park in Berkeley. The cost for the two-day camp is \$100. Former major and minor league players and current major league scouts will provide instruction. For information call 510-243-1297.

911 Fitness Challenge registration

The 6th annual Pinnacle 911 Fitness Challenge will begin Jan. 9-17 and continue through April 2-10. Military, firefighters, police officers, emergency medical personnel, and other public safety personnel and spouses are eligible. Teams consist of a minimum of three and a maximum of five members. The team who loses the most fat and gains the most muscle wins, with the winners determined on team percent of progress for 12 weeks. The winning team in each of four national regions will receive a \$5,000 prize. The cost is \$49 per person. Proceeds are donated to the Shriner's Children's Hospitals. Pre-registration deadline is Dec. 29. For information or registration call 305-297-5328 or visit www.911fitness.com.

Oakland Oaks Baseball tryouts

The Oakland Oaks Baseball Club will be holding tryouts for ages 16-under and 18-under for their 2004 season Jan. 25 at Laney College in Oakland. Players must register for tryouts before Jan. 16. Age cut off is Aug. 1, 2004. For information call Coach Palmore at 510-867-8648 or visit www.eteamz.com/oaklandoaks16.

Oakland Oaks seek baseball coaches

The Oakland Oaks traveling baseball program is looking for coaches for the 2004 summer season for players ages 15-18. Previ-

ous coaching experience or high level playing experience is required. The positions come with a stipend. Fax resumes to 510-748-5332, e-mail Mark Palmore at coachpalmore@yahoo.com or visit www.eteamz.com/oaklandoaks16.

Mid-County Officials seek umpires

The Mid-County Officials Network is looking for baseball and fastpitch softball umpires for its 2004 season for youth league softball/baseball, high school softball/baseball and college softball. Game fees range from \$39-\$60 per game. Trainings start in January. Games are played in Contra Costa, Alameda and Solano Counties. For information and training packets call 510-301-2928.

Candy Cane basketball tourney

The Richmond Recreation and Parks Department and the Richmond Police Activities League will be holding their annual Candy Cane Classic Youth Basketball Tournament Dec. 26-27 and Dec. 29-31 between 12:30-8 p.m. for boys and girls ages 8-14. Register at the Richmond Recreation Complex at 3230 Macdonald Ave. The cost is \$50 per team. For information call Frank Lacy at 510-620-6919 or Dan Hughey at 510-620-6795.

Berkeley High alumni lacrosse game

Berkeley High School will be holding its annual alumni lacrosse game Dec. 28 at noon on the BHS football field. For information call Peter Flessel at 510-559-8834.

East Bay Bat Busters seek players

The East Bay Bat Busters 14-under ASA girl's fastpitch softball team is looking for players for its spring/summer season. For information call Danny Gomez at 925-584-5979.

ACCAL

FROM PAGE 1

was in the Red Division. Saturday was a good day for all three teams.

Berkeley edged Mater Dei-Santa Ana 51-50 as Joy White paced the Yellow Jackets with 13 points. El Cerrito defeated Westview, Ariz., 60-41, led by 16 points by Turquoise Wilder and 14 rebounds by Ashley Jackson.

Roundup

FROM PAGE 1

Michael Page Jr. paced Richmond with 11 points. Teammate Wendell McKines added 10 points. Albany was paced by Jeremy Jennings and Brandon Hinchey, who both scored eight points.

GIRLS SOCCER

Berkeley 7, Encinal 0: In a battle of undefeated Alameda Contra Costa Athletic League teams, the visiting Yellow Jackets (4-0 ACCAL) scored five goals in the first half on their way to a convincing win over the Jets (4-5-3, 2-1-1) last Thursday.

Kristina Hall produced four goals for Berkeley, and teammate Haley Geller added two goals.

BOYS SOCCER

Berkeley 2, Encinal 0: The host Yellow Jackets (9-2, 3-1 ACCAL) used goals from Jesse Guerrero and Kamani Hill to defeat the Jets (4-3-2, 2-1) last Thursday.

BSAL

FROM PAGE 1

PIEDMONT BOYS TAKE CONSOLATION FINAL
The Piedmont boys won the consolation final of the Otis Spunkmeyer Tournament with a 58-45 win over St. Patrick, Dec. 21.

Eric Flato led the way for the Highlanders with 31 points and was named the tournament Most Valuable Player. The Bruins' Brennan Cofresi was also named to the All-Tournament team. He scored 17 points to lead St. Patrick.

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SCOREBOARD

Basketball

BOYS

Richmond 44, Albany 25

RICHMOND (2-3)
Leonard Neal 4 0-0 0, Chris Gray 1 0 0, Navane Sangster 0 0-0, Ernesto Casteneda 0 0-0, Michael Page Jr. 4 2-2 11, Wendell McKines 5 0-2 10, Caman Dearmon 2 0-0 4, Fari Waqar 3 2-2 8. Totals 19-46-44.

ALBANY (3-5)
Michael Aoyama 0 0-0, Irving McKnight 0 0-0, Jeremy Jennings 0 0-0, Jermayne Slaughter 0 0-0, Cory Hiraga 1 0-0 2, Chris Aoyama 0 0-0, Arash Firah 1 0-0 2, Eddie Jumezake 1 0-0 2, Ben Goldenson 0 0-0, Brandon Hinchey 3 2 8, Deane Wallace 0 0-0, Nick Golden 2 0-4 13. Totals 6-13-25.

Richmond 10 15 9 44
Albany 4 13 8 25
3-point goals: Page, Neal fouled out Waco

Mt. Diablo 60, Albany 50
MT. DIABLO (4-1)
Josh Temple 1 2-4 4, James Sheehan 0 3-4 3, Antonio Flagg 7 1-2 19, Nathan Shingley 3 5-6 12, Louis Leonard 2 1-2 6, Mike Espanola 0 2-2 2, Tal Lefts 2 2-4 7, Max Nelson 2 0-0 5, Irvell Williams 1 0-0 2, Anthony Nelson 0 0-0, Richard Palmer 0 0-0. Totals 18-16-64.

ALBANY (3-6)
Michael Aoyama 0 0-0, Jeremy Jennings 6 2-2 14, Eddie Jumezake 2 1-2 6, Arash Firah 0 0-0, Brandon Hinchey 7 4 18, Chris Aoyama 0 0-0, Irving McKnight 1 0-2, Ben Goldenson 0 0-0, Nick Golden 5 0-0 10, Deane Wallace 0 0-0, Cory Hiraga 0 0-0, Jermayne Slaughter 0 0-0, Arash Firah 1 0-2, Alexander Maxwell 2 0-0 4. Totals 21-11-50.

Mt. Diablo 10 8 15 17
Albany 10 12 17 11
3-point goals: Flagg, A. Shingley

Highlights: Mt. — Temple 6 steals, A — Hinchey 8 rebounds
Stuart Hall-S.F. 69, Albany 66, OT

ALBANY (3-7)
Michael Aoyama 2 0-1 5, Irving McKnight 0 2-2 2, Jeremy Jennings 2 1-2 5, Jermayne Slaughter 0 0-0, Cory Hiraga 1 0-0 2, Chris Aoyama 0 0-0, Irving McKnight 1 0-2, Ben Goldenson 0 0-0, Nick Golden 5 0-0 10, Deane Wallace 0 0-0, Cory Hiraga 0 0-0, Jermayne Slaughter 0 0-0, Arash Firah 1 0-2, Alexander Maxwell 2 0-0 4. Totals 20-16-23.

ALBANY (3-8)
Lee 0 0-0, Tambara 1 0-1 2, McCluskey 0 0-0, Amador 4 5-11 17, Urbanski 3 4-8 3, Saran 2 5-12 10, Haight 4 4-6 27, Gallagher 2 0-2. Totals 18-33-69.

Albany 14 19 12 5 6
Stuart Hall 14 15 18 5 69
3-point goals: M. Aoyama, Amador 3, Saran, Haight 5, fouled out Golden

TAMALPAIS
Griffin 1 0-0 2, Cleggham 4 1-9 9, Mulholland 1 3-4 5, Day 1 0-2, Durr 1 0-2 2, Kirsch 1 0-0 2. Totals 9-11-22.

ST. MARY'S (7-3)
Thurston 3 1-5 10, Gurganious 4 3-8 12, McIntyre 3 3-9 10, Green 2 2-8 7, White 0 1-2 1, Manente 5 0-0 10, Caligan 1 2-4 9, Ower 1 0-0 3. Totals 19-12-38.

St. Mary's 11 16 18 13 58
3-point goals: Cavanaugh, Thurston 3, Green 2, Gurganious, McIntyre, Ower

St. Mary's 83, Cardinal Newman 57
ST. MARY'S
Thurston 5 2-4 13, Gurganious 8 10-13 26, McIntyre 5 1-3 11, Green 3 1-1 7, White 2 0-0 4, Manente 1 2-5 3, Caligan 0 1-2 1, Wright 3 0-0 7, Brown 1 0-0 2, Ower 1 1-3 7. Totals 31 18-26 83.

CARDINAL NEWMAN (6-2)
Oyer 2 3-4 7, Fitzgerald 4 2-4 12, Pedersen 7 3-3 20, Thieson 1 4-5 10, Cornau 1 0-0 2, Sexton 0 2-2 3, Hauge 0 0-0 0.

Basketball

PIEDMONT BOYS TAKE CONSOLATION FINAL

The Piedmont boys won the consolation final of the Otis Spunkmeyer Tournament with a 58-45 win over St. Patrick, Dec. 21.

Eric Flato led the way for the Highlanders with 31 points and was named the tournament Most Valuable Player. The Bruins' Brennan Cofresi was also named to the All-Tournament team. He scored 17 points to lead St. Patrick.

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Reviews

FROM PAGE C3

"THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS": It takes a lot of forgiving and forgetting to derive any pleasure from this final chapter in the stylish man-vs.-machine trilogy. You have to let go of disappointment over "Reloaded," the second installment released earlier this year; you must overlook a truly hideous opening hour; and you have to forget the first "Matrix," an exhilarating experience that never succumbed, as this does, to self-conscious solemnity, senseless riddles and protracted death scenes. — P. Flowers. (R: sci-fi violence, brief sexual content.) 2 hours, 9 minutes. C

"MONA LISA SMILE": Not much thrilling about this ensemble piece, with Julia Roberts as a bohemian, '50s-era art history professor who heads to Wellesley to shake things up. It's got Kirsten Dunst, Julia Stiles, Maggie Gyllenhaal and Marcia Gay Harden, but mostly it's a blur of tweed skirts and cardigan sweaters. The best thing: Julia's turquoise earrings. — M. Pols. (PG-13: sexual content, thematic issues.) 1 hour, 57 minutes. C+

"MYSTIC RIVER": There are many reasons to admire this dark drama, from the remarkable level of acting talent to the maturity and measured elegance of Clint Eastwood's direction. The film stimulates its audience like a classic old-fashioned mystery, the tension building to almost painful levels. Two tragedies lie at its heart, with breakout performances by Sean Penn and Tim Robbins as childhood friends forever shaped by ominous events. — M. Pols. (R: language, violence.) 2 hours, 17 minutes. A-

"PAYCHECK": John Woo directs, Ben Affleck and Uma Thurman star in this thriller, equal parts sci-fi writer Philip Dick and Alfred Hitchcock. Affleck is a consultant doing top-secret digital piracy work, expecting a huge payoff for one last job. But the payday is delayed. Sadly, Woo displays little of his trademark flair, and the dual influences don't jibe. — B. Strauss. (PG-13: violence, language.) 2 hours. C

"PETER PAN": A lavish spectacle with a bittersweet core; an old-fashioned family treat. P.J. Hogan ("My Best Friend's Wedding") may have created a classic of his own, by staying true to J.M. Barrie's beloved source material. Peter Pan is played by a boy, which is re-

freshing, and this Wendy has more dimension than most. — M. Pols. (PG: action sequences and peril.) 1 hour, 53 minutes. B+

"PIECES OF APRIL": With a theme about a dying mother (Patricia Clarkson), an estranged daughter (Katie Holmes), and a Thanksgiving dinner reunion, this film from writer/director Peter Hedges has the potential to be as cloying as sweet potato pie. But Hedges ("What's Eating Gilbert Grape") gracefully dodges that bullet, delivering a movie that manages to be darkly funny and deeply touching at the same time. — M. Pols. (PG-13: language, sensuality, drug content and images of nudity.) 1 hour, 21 minutes. A-

"SCHOOL OF ROCK": Jack Black stars as Dewey Finn in this happy, crowd-pleasing package with an off-beat, slightly demented script. He's a guitarist with delusions of being a musical deity. Fired from his latest ensemble, desperate for cash to enter a battle-of-the-bands contest and have his revenge, Dewey passes himself off as his substitute-teacher roommate and takes a job at a swank prep school. Put Black in a classroom of uptight, uniformed over-achievers who now have an aimless sub for a teacher, and watch the sparks fly. — R. Moore. (PG-13: rude humor and drug references.) 1 hour, 48 minutes. B+

"SHATTERED GLASS": In this based-on-true-life tale, one of the '90s most infamous journalists, New Republic staff writer Stephen Glass (Hayden Christensen), gets caught making up stories. We watch, with great satisfaction, as his web of lies is slowly revealed by his editor (Peter Sarsgaard). With his effective, slimy performance, Christensen proves there is life beyond Anakin Skywalker. — M. Pols. (PG-13: language.) 1 hour, 34 minutes. B

"SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE": When making a love story, you've got to consider the kissability of your stars. Watching this movie, it's hard to imagine anyone wanting to smooch the male lead. That would be Jack Nicholson, as a raffish music executive who starts out dating a young woman (Amanda Peet), but finds himself falling for her mother (Diane Keaton). This was an opportunity to make a statement about truly adult romance, but director Nancy Meyers blows it. — M. Pols. (PG-13: sexual content, brief nudity, strong language.) C

"THE STATION AGENT": A reticent dwarf, a grieving mother and a chatty hot-dog vendor walk into a

bar. Actually, they drink beer on a porch. Sounds like the setup to a joke, but it's the premise of this small film bursting with insightful humor, unforced poignancy and beautifully drawn characters. Peter Dinklage, Patricia Clarkson and Bobby Cannavale vividly portray three lonely people in rural New Jersey who form an unlikely social circle, despite their antisocial tendencies. — C. Lemire. (R: language, some drug content.) 1 hour, 30 minutes. B+

"STUCK ON YOU": The Farrelly brothers have mocked incest, obesity and schizophrenia; now they take on conjoined twins. But they've pushed the boundaries so relentlessly, there's no shock value left. Greg Kinnear we expect to be funny, Matt Damon also does a terrific job as his brother, joined at the hip. But still the movie drags, and limps to its conclusion. — M. Pols. (PG-13: crude and sexual humor, some language.) C+

"21 GRAMS": Like Mexican director Gonzalez Inarritu's last film, "Amores Perros," this one is about the ways tragedy (in this case a car accident) creates an unstoppable emotional maelstrom for those involved. Its arty, choppy style distracts from the truth: that the film is permeated with melodrama and not as deep as it seems. Sean Penn is great in the lead, but better in "Mystic River." — M. Pols. (R: language, sexuality, some violence and drug use.) 2 hours, 5 minutes. B-

"YOSSI & JAGGER": Why does company commander Yossi insist that his second-in-command, Jagger, accompany him on a routine task away from the other soldiers? The answer comes when the two men, safely distant from the others, throw down their weapons in the snow and kiss. Eytan Fox's short but powerful drama employs a handheld video camera, evoking a believable sense of grunt life in which people cope with the dangers of military existence by living as normally as they can. — D. Thomson. (PG-13: sexual themes, obscenity and violence; in Hebrew with English subtitles.) 1 hour, 11 minutes. B+

"YOUNG BLACK STALLION": A horse of a very familiar color. This prequel to "The Black Stallion," but not by the people who made that magnificent film, it's your basic plucky kid and majestic animal movie set in a picturesque locale (Egypt), but with a very muddy plot. Gorgeous IMAX photography. — C. Hewitt. (G) 45 minutes. C-

Subtext saves 'Cold Mountain'

■ Less about romance than the trailers imply, the film's real emphasis is on the brutality of war

By Mary F. Pols
STAFF WRITER

AS A ROMANCE, Anthony Minghella's "Cold Mountain" isn't much of a success. As a story of the Civil War, it's much better, a beautifully rendered depiction of how the war was lived back home, in the places a safe distance from the major battlefields, but dangerous in their own way.

Maybe we were never supposed to think of it as a love story, but early rumors from the set, (apparently unfounded) that co-stars Jude Law and Nicole Kidman were having an affair, set that tone. No matter what happened in Romania, where the movie was filmed, we imagined that real life supposedly reflected constant cinematic combustion.

In fact, Law and Kidman spend very little time together on screen. Law's character, a silent, rather dull loner named Inman, goes off to fight in the war, leaving behind Ada (Kidman), a sweetheart he's mainly admired from afar. Most of the movie revolves around his journey to get back home — on foot — after he deserts, while Ada struggles to survive in the mountains of North Carolina.

Inman is up against his own army, which is combing the back woods looking for deserters, while Ada faces poverty and possible starvation (although Kidman never stops glowing like a cosmetics model). She's a delicate creature, trained to play the piano and pour lemonade and read novels. Kind of a drip, in short. After the death of her father (Donald Sutherland), she's just about helpless. The town creep, Teague (Ray Winstone from "Sexy Beast"), who leads a band of menacing misfits, would be happy to take care of her, but she's waiting for Inman.

Charles Frazier's book "Cold Mountain," which was an out-of-nowhere unexpected best seller, has been adapted for the screen

MOVIE REVIEW

■ WHAT: "Cold Mountain"

■ STARRING: Jude Law, Nicole Kidman, Renee Zellweger, Kathy Baker, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Giovanni Ribisi

■ RATING: R (for violence, language, brief nudity)

■ RUNNING TIME: 2 hours, 35 minutes

■ WHERE: Opens today at area theaters.

■ GRADE: B

by Minghella, who played the same dual writing/directing role with "The Talented Mr. Ripley" and "The English Patient." In comparison, Frazier's novel is weaker source material, but Minghella has massaged it into something better. With his clout, he's also commanded quite a cast, not just Law, Kidman and Renee Zellweger — as the farm hand who comes to Ada's aid — but a corps de ballet that includes Giovanni Ribisi, Brendan Gleeson and Kathy Baker.

This parade of high-class actors playing small supporting roles is impressive, but also somewhat distracting. Philip Seymour Hoffman enters stage left as a horny preacher, drawing charmingly and livening up the film, then exits stage right, to be replaced by Eileen Atkins ("The Hours") in eccentric mountain-woman costume. Then along comes the lovely, rather grown up Natalie Portman, who plays a fetching war widow looking for companionship with Inman. I was reminded of TV's great miniseries "Roots," where familiar faces would turn up in period costume, hang around for a night and be gone by the time the next installment aired.

But "Cold Mountain" needs these players, because on their own, Law's Inman and Kidman's Ada are not compelling enough to keep us in our seats for two and a half hours. In fact, the film fairly plods along for the first 45 minutes. It picks up some speed when Hoffman shows up, but it's not until Zellweger storms onto

the screen that we notice and start

She plays Ruby Thewissen, learned to take and run a late man. She flirts property tips, hips, and often as an employee. When she was less, covering an overgrown porch, a novel and fending a greasy rooster. He snaps his neck and put 'em in a pot. Zehn the whole role is obviously close to a country hamper, that we go along up adoring in sturdy young women. "Cold Mountain."

The movie film it began. You walk of it not as a romance, a film about the fence to survive, how low feed that instant circumstances, can't be to form untornable.

I felt about it more about "Titanic," where that it was supposed to romance between, that captivated more, what actually moved the thought of all the going to the next, that prime example, dust a merr, bottom of the "Cold Mountain," what most was Minghella's pelling recreation of when our country apart by politics, our citizens brutal, other, when our taken from us, our destroyed — all been aternal strife.

Yet still, America was rebuilt. Fields songs were sung, bluegrass makes its way, movie's soundtrack, born — in no small part of the desire of people Ruby and Inman to that place and that life, sure so.

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Opinion Fanned your seat belts Albany Transportation Plan vote is coming [A5]

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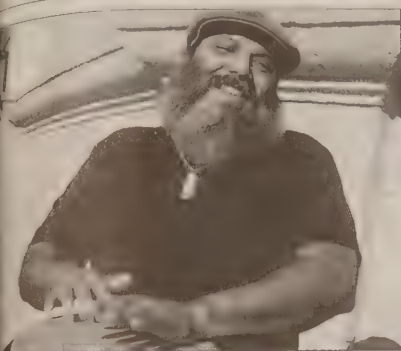
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Events



Holiday groove

YOSHIS HAS ASSEMBLED a get-ready-for-some-serious-grooves band to warm things up this holiday period. Bay Area Latin fusionist extraordinaire Poncho Sanchez will team with accordion B-3 organ master Joey DeFrancesco and funk-filled vibronist Fred Wesley in a series of shows culminating with a New Year's Eve extravaganza. Poncho Sanchez and friends perform 8 and 10 tonight, Saturday through Tuesday and 9 p.m. Wednesday at Yoshi's, 510 Embarcadero Square, Oakland. Tickets \$26, \$100 for the New Year's Eve extended show. Contact 510-832-9200 or www.yoshis.com.

COMEDY

BIG FAT YEAR-END KISS OFF COMEDY SHOW XI — Dec. 26 through 28. Will Durst and friends Johnny Bosser, Mike Bossier, Debi Durst and Howard Kravitz present a night of improv comedy, improvisation and comedy sketches for their annual year-end show.

8 p.m. Julia Morgan Center for the Arts, 2640 College Ave., Berkeley. 510-825-798-1300 or www.juliamorgan.org

THEATRE

THE LOCKER — Mondays, 10 p.m. at the Locker, 10

3817 Shattuck Ave., Oakland. 510-825-1025 or www.comedyaccess.com

LA JOLLA ARENA

2003 Soul Festival, Dec. 28, 7 p.m. with comedians Rickey Smiley and Earthquake, and musicians Earth, Wind and Fire and the Isley Brothers.

8 p.m. Hegenberger Road and Interstate 880, Oakland. 925-762-2277, 925-762-2277, 415-478-2277, 408-998-2277. 650-478-2277 or www.tickets.com

THEATRE

AMOUNT THEATRE — 8 p.m. Amation Tour starring Chris 3817 Shattuck Ave., Oakland. 510-825-1025 or www.comedyaccess.com

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New Year's Eve Balkan Bash, Dec. 31, 9 p.m. Featuring Zabava, Izvorno, Anoush, Joe and Leslie, and Edessa. \$18.

Moh Alileche with Les Amis Dancers, Jan. 2, 9 p.m. \$13.

Dubwise, Firme, DJ Spiff Skankin, Jan. 3, 8:30 p.m. \$13.

1317 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley. 510-525-5055 or www.ashkenaz.com.

BECKETT'S IRISH PUB — Sterling Dervish, Dec. 26.

Nicole McRory, Dec. 27 and Jan. 3. Nicole and the Soul Sisters, Dec. 31.

Andy Summers Band, Jan. 1. Free For 21 and older. Music at 9:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted. 2271 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-647-1790 or www.beckettsirishpub.com

BLAKE'S ON TELEGRAPH — El-mnopn, Feenorn Circle, FourOneFunk, Dec. 26, \$7.

Through Walls, Thriving Ivory, Drveline, Dec. 27, \$6.

"New Year's Eve Smash," Dec. 31. With KGB and Sol Americano. \$10.

Acoustic Wednesday with Mikie Lee Prasad and guests, Wednesdays, 10 p.m. Free. Steve Gannon Band and Mr. Dee, Mondays. \$4.

For ages 18 and older. Music at 9:30 p.m. 2367 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley. 510-848-0886 or www.blakesontelegraph.com

DOWNTOWN — Frank Jackson, Dec. 26.

Spencer Day, Dec. 27. Mimi Fox Solo Guitar, Dec. 30.

Jules Broussard, Bing Nathan and Ned Boynton, Dec. 31.

Ken El Lebrjano Flamenco Guitar, Jan. 1.

Wayne Wallace Quartet, Jan. 3. Free. Tuesday through Thursday at 8 p.m. Friday, Saturday and Sunday at 9:30 p.m. 2102 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-649-3810 or www.downtown-restaurant.com

FREIGHT AND SALVAGE — Kammern and Swan, Dec. 27. \$15.50 to \$16.50.

David Griesman Bluegrass Experience, Dec. 28. \$20.50 to \$21.50.

"New Year's Eve Bluegrass Bash," Dec. 31. With High Country, Dix Bruce and Jim Nunally. \$22.50 to \$23.50.

Cheap Suit Serenaders, Jan. 2. \$19.50 to \$20.50.

Oak, Ash and Thorn, Jan. 3. \$17.50 to \$18.50.

Rosalie Sorrels, Jan. 4. \$16.50 to \$17.50.

Music starts at 8 p.m. unless otherwise noted. 1111 Addison St., Berkeley. 510-548-1761, (866) 468-3399 or www.freightandsalvage.org

KIMBALLS EAST — Tito Jackson and

Brothers Band, Dec. 26 and Dec. 27. \$28. Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m. and 10 p.m.; Sunday, 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. 6005 Shellmond St., Emeryville. 510-762-BASS or www.kimballs.com

LA PENA CULTURAL CENTER — Orquesta La Moderna Tradicion, Dec. 31, 9:30 p.m. \$20 to \$22.

Domingo de Rumba, Jan. 4, 3:30 p.m. Free.

3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2568 or www.lapena.org

924 GILMAN ST. — The Phenomenauts, The Sorettes, The Stellas, No Apologies Project, The Skyflakes, Dec. 27.

Enemies, Modern Machines, Black Rice, Angry for Life, Jan. 2.

Himesa, To See You Broken, Assailant, Jan. 3.

All ages welcome. Shows are \$5 and start at 8 p.m. unless otherwise noted. 924 Gilman St., Berkeley. 510-525-9926 or www.924gilman.org

OAKLAND ARENA — The Dead, Dec. 30 and Dec. 31, 7 p.m. With the Funk Brothers on Wednesday.

\$42.28 to \$71.45. Hegenberger Road and Interstate 880, Oakland. 925-762-2277, 510-762-2277, 415-478-2277, 408-998-2277, 650-478-2277 or www.tickets.com

OAKLAND BOX THEATRE — "Tuesday Night Oakland Box Series," 8 p.m. Live and experimental music. \$7 to \$1000.

1928 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-451-1932 or www.oaklandbox.com

PARAMOUNT THEATRE — Gerald Lev-ert, Will Downing, Jan. 3, 8 p.m.

\$39.50 to \$75.50. 2025 Broadway, Oakland. 925-685-TIXS, 510-625-TIXS, 415-421-TIXS or www.ticketmaster.com

QUINN'S LIGHTHOUSE — Starboard Watch featuring Skip Henderson, Thursday, 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Free. 51 Embarcadero Cove, Oakland. 510-536-2050

STARRY PLOUGH PUB — Hobo Jungle, 7th Direction, Dec. 28. \$5.

Sh*t Outta Luck, Troy's Bucket, Dec. 31, \$8.

For ages 21 and over unless otherwise noted. Sunday and Wednesday, 8 p.m.; Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 9:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

3101 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-841-2082.

STORK CLUB — Silletta, The Stellas, Dec. 26.

Drunk Horse, Harold Ray Live, Dec. 31. \$5. All shows at 9 p.m. unless otherwise noted. 2330 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-444-6174 or www.storkcluboakland.com

YOSHIS — Poncho Sanchez Band with Joey DeFrancesco and Fred Wesley, Dec. 26 through Dec. 31. Friday, Saturday, Monday and Tuesday, 8 p.m.



The kiss-off is back

POLITICALLY MINDED COMEDIAN WILL DURST once again headlines the Big Fat Year-End Kiss-Off Comedy show, making three stops in the East Bay over the next several days. Also on the irreverent, definitely un-PC comedy team are Mike Bossier, Debi Durst and Pittsburg native Johnny Steele. The Kiss-Off Comedy Show comes to Amador Theater, 1155 Santa Rita Road, Pleasanton, at 8 tonight (\$15-\$25, 925-931-5361, www.c.pleasanton.ca.us); to the Dean Leshner Regional Center for the Arts, Civic Drive at Locust Street, Walnut Creek (\$20, 925-943-SHOW, www.dlrca.org); and to Julia Morgan Center for the Arts, 2640 College Ave., Berkeley, at 8 p.m. Sunday (\$17, 925-798-1300).

and 10 p.m.; Wednesday, 9 p.m. \$26 to \$100.

Earl Klugh, Jan. 1 through Jan. 4. \$10 to \$24.

Shows are Monday through Saturday, 8 p.m. and 10 p.m.; Sunday, 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. unless otherwise noted. 510 Embarcadero West, Oakland. 510-238-9200, www.yoshis.com or www.ticketweb.com

DANCE — Ashkenaz — Sauce Piquante, Dec. 30, 8:30 p.m. Cajun dance lessons, 8 p.m.

Moh Alileche with Les Amis Dancers, Jan. 2, 9 p.m. \$13.

\$9, 1317 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley.

510-525-5055 or www.ashkenaz.com

STARRY PLOUGH PUB — "Dance Class & Celi," Mondays, 7 p.m. Traditional Irish music and dance.

"The Starry Session," Sundays, 8 p.m. Irish traditional music and song led by Shay Black. Sliding scale.

For age 21 and over. Dance lesson at 7 p.m.; music at 9 p.m. 3101 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-841-2082

OUTDOORS — Bay Area Rail Trails — A network of trails converted from unused railway corridors.

OHLONE GREENWAY — A 3.75-mile

See EVENTS, Page C6

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Since 1964

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AE	American Express	\$	Entrées under \$7
CB	Carte Blanche	\$5-\$14	
DC	Diners Club	\$5-\$20	
DS	Discover Card	\$20+	
MC	MasterCard		
VS	Visa	FB	Full Bar
AC	All Cards accepted	RR	Reservations recommended
CA	Checks accepted	W	Wheelchair access

Pasta Pelican
2455 Mariner Square Drive, Alameda (510) 864-7427

For the past four years, pasta Pelican Restaurant has been delighting its guests with a variety of unique dishes. Their extensive menu offers veal, steak, seafood, chicken classic pastas, salads, sandwiches and appetizers. Guests are raving about this waterfront restaurant for their famous fresh baked bread, fried calamari, homemade clam chowder, variety of salads, attentive, friendly service, and inviting atmosphere. All this for what is considered to be one of the best values in the Bay Area. Formerly The Rusty Pelican, the restaurant is located in Alameda, behind the Webster Tube with a spectacular view of Jack London Square and the Oakland Hills. You will truly enjoy this fine dining experience. Parking and docking are free. For reservations please call (510) 864-7427.

Pier 29 Waterfront Restaurant
300 - 29th Avenue, Oakland (510) 261-1621

Good food, friendly service, and comfortable atmosphere describe Pier 29 Waterfront Restaurant. For over 30 years the restaurant has been located adjacent to the Park Street Bridge overlooking the Alameda/Oakland estuary. The "Pier" offers an extensive menu featuring fresh seafood, Angus New York steak, prime rib, pasta, teriyaki ribs, daily specials, and much more. The theme in the kitchen is "good homestyle cooking." Brunch is served on weekends from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. and the popular earlybird menu is featured daily. Every table has a view of the water and there is plenty of free parking. The Pier is open 7 days a week, Mon. - Fri. 11 a.m. - 10 p.m., Sat. & Sun. 9 a.m. - 10 p.m. Bar Hours: Mon. - Thu. 11 a.m. - 11 p.m., Fri. - Sat.

Speisekammer
2424 Lincoln Ave., Alameda (510) 522-1500

Speisekammer presents Modern German Cuisine that is good for the body and soul. Sauerbraten, Wiener Schnitzel and a house recipe Bratwurst are standards. Light fare such as the Gemüesstrudel (Vegetable Strudel with Goat Cheese, Roasted Red Pepper and Spinach. Served in a Carrot Sauce) give the menu a modern (or California) twist. There is a word in the German language that has no counterpart in English: Gemütlichkeit. It connotes a combination of comfort, friendship, and the general sentiment of being completely at ease with your surroundings. Speisekammer's atmosphere is Gemütlich. Large tables and a private room make it a great place for groups. The Beer is Strictly German. The Cocktails are Distinctly American, and the wine list has some of each. Lunch is served Tues-Fri - Grilled Pannini Sandwiches and Salads are offered along with some of the more popular entrée items. Sunday Brunch is to die for! 10am-2pm. Dinner is served Tues-Sun W, \$-\$\$\$ AC, FB, RR

Pier 29 WATERFRONT RESTAURANT

New Year's Eve Special Dinner For 2

- Crab Cake Appetizers • Soup or Salad
- Prime Rib & Sautéed Prawns
- Chocolate Mousse

\$59.95

Serving lunch & dinner from 11:00 am to 10:00 pm

- Prime Rib • New York Steak • Lobster Tail • Lamb
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300 - 29th Avenue, Oakland
At the Foot of Park Street Bridge
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Speisekammer - A German Take On Alameda

Modern German Cuisine
2424 Lincoln Avenue Alameda 510-522-1300
www.speisekammer.com

Events

FROM PAGE C5

paved trail converted from the Alchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railway. Suitable for strollers and skaters. The trail runs over elevated BART tracks from Conlon and Key Streets in El Cerrito to Virginia and Acton Streets in Berkeley. 510-215-4382, 510-528-5759 or 510-644-6566

SHEPHERD CANYON TRAIL — A 3-mile paved trail converted from the Sacramento Northern Rail Line. The tree-lined trail is gently sloping and generally follows Shepherd Canyon Road. Suitable for walkers and cyclists. Begins in Montclair Village behind McCaulou's Department Store on Medea Place and ends at Paso Robles Drive, Oakland. 510-238-7275.

BAY AREA RIDGE TRAIL — The Bay Area Ridge Trail, when completed will be a 400-mile regional trail system that will form a loop around the entire San Francisco Bay region, linking 75 public parks and open spaces to thousands of people and hundreds of communities. Hikes on portions of the trail are available through the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council. Call for meeting sites.

ALAMEDA COUNTY —

"Tilden and Wildcat Bike Rides." Wednesday, 5:30 p.m. A vigorous ride through Tilden and Wildcat Canyon Regional Parks. Reservations required. Distance: 15 miles. Elevation gain: 2,000 feet. Difficulty: intermediate. Pace: fast. Meeting place: In front of the North Berkeley BART Station. 510-849-9650.

DUNSMUIR HOUSE AND GARDENS

HISTORIC ESTATE — Nestled in the Oakland hills, the 50-acre Dunsmuir House and Gardens estate includes the 37-room Neoclassical Revival Dunsmuir Mansion, built by coal and lumber baron Alexander Dunsmuir for his bride. Restored outbuildings set amid landscaped gardens surround the mansion.

ESTATE GROUNDS — through December. The 50 acres of gardens and grounds at the mansion are open to the public. Free Self-Guided Grounds Tour booklets are available at Dinkelspiel House. Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free.

Dunsmuir House and Gardens Historic Estate, 2960 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland. 510-615-5555.

OAKLAND ZOO — The zoo includes a Children's Petting Zoo, the Skyline, a miniature train, a carousel, picnic grounds and a gift shop as well as the animals in site-specific exhibits, which allow them to roam freely. Included are "The African Savanna" with its two huge mixed-animal aviaries and 11 African Savanna exhibits; the Mahali Pa Tembo (Place of the Elephant) with African lions, giraffes, chimpanzees and more than 330 other animals from around the world; "Simba Pori," Swahili for "Lion Country," a spacious 1.5-acre habitat offering both a savanna and woodland setting for African lions; "Footprints from the Past," an anthropology exhibit showcasing 4 million years of human evolution and an actual "footpath" of the first hominids to emerge from the African savanna; "Sun Bear Exhibit," a state-of-the-art space the zoo has developed for its two sun bears; and Siamang Island, a state-of-the-art, barrier-free area that emulates the gibbons' native tropical rain forest habitat.

EXHIBIT — "Mountain Lions" ongoing. An exhibit designed to educate people about the mountain lion, its habitat, physiology, history in California, and myths that surround these mammals. In addition there is a film titled "Cougar: Elusive Predator" by the Discovery Channel in the Children's Theater. At the Education Center. Open daily during zoo hours. Free with regular Zoo admission.

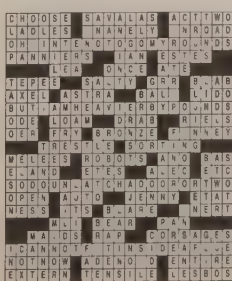
SPECIAL EVENT — "ZooLights," through Jan. 3. The annual holiday light display. See the Oakland Zoo turned into an exotic winter wonderland after dark with 200,000 twinkling lights, offering the Bay Area's largest holiday lights display. Stroll or ride the train through this magical display. Weather permitting, nightly 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.; CLOSED DEC. 31. \$5 to \$6.50 general; \$4 to \$5 seniors and children age 2 to 14; free children under age 2.

\$7.50 general; \$4.50 seniors and children ages 2 to 14; free children under age 2; \$3 parking fee. Daily, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Knowland Park, 9777 Golf Links Road, exit off Interstate Highway 580, Oakland. 510-632-9525 or www.oaklandzoo.org.

USS POTOMAC — The 165-foot presidential yacht USS Potomac was called the "Floating White House" when it was refurbished at the beginning of World War II for use by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. The yacht has been restored to its World War II splendor and visitors may see it docked at the foot of Clay Street. The USS Potomac offers both dockside tours of the ship and two-hour narrated history cruises on Saturdays in August and September.

DOCKSIDE TOURS — The tour takes about an hour and discusses how FDR used the ship. Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, noon to 4 p.m. \$5 general; \$3 seniors; free youths age 18 and under.

USS Potomac: FDR Pier, Foot of Clay



Street, northwest end of Jack London Square, Oakland. Polomac Visitor Center: 540 Water St., Oakland. 510-627-1502 or www.uspotomac.org.

ROBERT SIBLEY VOLCANIC REGIONAL PRESERVE — East Bay residents have several volcanoes in their backyard. This park contains Round Top, one of the highest peaks in the Oakland Hills.

"Sunrise at Sibley — A New Day and New Year," Dec. 28, 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. Watch the sun rise and explore the preserve to learn about its mysteries. Bring a breakfast snack to share. Rain cancels.

"Splendor of Sibley," Dec. 28, 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. A short program about the volcanic park, focusing on the natural and cultural significance of the park.

Free. 6800 Skyline Blvd., Oakland. 510-521-6887 or www.ebparks.org.

TILDEN REGIONAL PARK —

NATURE AREA —

"Harry Potter's Pedigree," Dec. 28, 10 a.m. to noon. Learn about genetics by making a family tree for Harry and Hermione, and then discover traits in your own family.

"The Science of 'All-Flavor Beans,'" Dec. 28, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Learn about taste, make a map of your tongue and play "Nose Knows," then go home with a blue tongue.

"New Year's Eve Tea Tasting," Dec. 31, 1 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Learn the lore and natural history of tea. Sample a variety of teas and traditional refreshments. Bring your favorite cup and saucer. For ages 8 and above. Reservations required. \$10 to \$12.

"Annual New Year's Eve Hike," Dec. 31, 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. New Year's customs and traditions from around the world on this yearly walk. There will also be a poetry contest. Dress warmly. Okay to bring a flashlight.

"New Year Open House," Jan. 3, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sip some cider at the Visitor Center and learn about the water cycle in the "Story of Wildcat Creek Watershed."

REGIONAL PARKS BOTANIC GARDEN — Guided docent tours of the gardens. Call ahead for times and to confirm tour is on for the day; most Saturdays and Sundays, 2 p.m.

Free unless noted otherwise. Entrances off Wildcat Canyon Road and Grizzly Peak Boulevard, Berkeley. 510-525-2233 or www.ebparks.org.

UC BERKELEY BOTANICAL GARDEN —

— ongoing. The gardens have displays of exotic and native plants.

TOURS — Botanical Garden Tours, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday, 1:30 p.m. Meet at the Tour Orientation Center for a free docent tour.

"Sick Plant Clinic," first Saturday of every month, 9 a.m. to noon. UC plant pathology and entomology experts will diagnose what ails plants. Free. \$3 general; \$2 seniors; \$1 children ages 3 to 18; free on Thursday. Through Memorial Day: daily, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed the first Tuesday of every month for maintenance. Botanical Garden, 200 Centennial Drive, Berkeley. 510-643-2755 or http://botanical-garden.berkeley.edu.

MUSEUMS

AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM AND LIBRARY — "Walls of Heritage/Walls of Pride: African American Murals," closing Dec. 31. An exhibit of historical and contemporary murals created by African American artists from around the country. The exhibit features 52 photos of murals and 20 original works related to murals.

"The Long Walk to Freedom," closing Dec. 31. An exhibit of photographs, archival material, videos and writings highlighting the contributions of 12 civil rights activists who changed the face of the nation.

"Creativity and Resistance: Maroon Cultures in the Americas," ongoing. An exhibit featuring historical drawings and maps, a timeline, contemporary photographs and a selection of ceremonial and daily life objects.

"Golden Road to Freedom: The African Legacy in California, 1775-1900," on-

NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE CROSSWORD PUZZLE

MESSAGE FROM SANTA BY FRANCES HANSEN / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

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7 "Kojak" star

14 When Romeo talks to Juliet on the balcony

20 They can dish it out

21 Sans sense

22 Bit of progress

23 Start of a Christmas verse

26 Large baskets

27 Fleming or Hunter

28 Park

29 Meadow

30 Fairy tale start

31 Downed a sub, say

32 Indian council setting

36 Like learn

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39 Spill the beans

43 Skate's jump

44 "Ad" per aspera ("Kansas" motto)

46 Indonesian vacation destination

47 Fashionable beach resort

48 Verse, part 2

53 "To the Poets" for one

For all three answers call from a landline phone 1-800-285-5675. For all three answers call from a cell phone 1-800-835-5675.

54 The good earth

55 Grayish

56 Cambodian money

57 "the fields we go"

58 Use a wok

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61 "Under the Volcano" star, 1984

62 Certain bridge

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69 Unspontaneous ones

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72 What Eng. majors get

75 Cousin of a gnu

76 Summers on the Seine

77 One of the Waughes

78 Often-repeated abbr.

79 Verse, part 3

85 Unwrap, as a gift

86 Not manually, after "on"

87 Female donkey

88 "L...c'est moi"

89 Crenelated of early '60s TV

90 "Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas"

91 Trumpet sound

93 Lifeless

94 11th-century date

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2 "That's hysterical!"

3 God who presided over the Aesir

4 Actor Ken

5 In one's dotage

6 Cosmetician

7 Confession recitals

8 "a...a partide...a partide"

9 Winery, slight

10 Officially designate

11 Inheritance

12 How Santa travels

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14 Touchdown site

15 Place to see a Ben Franklin portrait

16 Constant

17 A huge amount

18 Real mouthful

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40 Table covers

41 Confuse

42 High-handed

43 Ovid's love elegies

45 Rural carriages

46 Texas river

49 Sch. in upstate N.Y.

50 Courtroom affirmation

51 "Ninotchka" director

52 Part of the Venetian

53 Put on, as cargo

54 Kyrgyz city

55 Dances of "Jezabel"

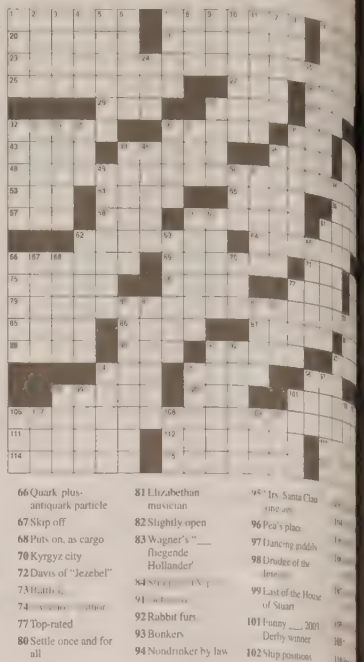
56 Renaissance fiddle

61 Sunday best

62 Morose insertions

63 Sugar plums and candy canes

65 Claw



going. An exhibit focusing on the role that people of African descent played in later expeditions and settlements before the annexation of California. Free. Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 5:30 p.m. 659 14th St., Oakland. 510-537-0200 or www.oaklandlibrary.org.

EBONY MUSEUM OF ARTS — A museum specializing in the art and history of Africa. The collection, which was on display in the museum's Jack London Village branch, has been incorporated with the material in the 141 Street Victorian Museum building, the site of the original museum. Free admission; \$2 guided tour. Monday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. 1034 14th St., Oakland. 510-763-0141.

GOLDEN STATE MODEL RAILROAD MUSEUM — closing Dec. 28. The museum features extensive displays of operating model railroads constructed and operated by the East Bay Model Engineers Society. Covering some 10,000 square feet, steam and modern diesel-powered freight and passenger trains operate in O, HO and N scales on separate layouts, as well as narrow gauge and trolley lines. Of special interest is the Tehachapi Pass and Loop on the N-scale layout showing how the multiple engine trains traverse the gorges and tunnels, passing over themselves to gain altitude to cross Tehachapi Summit just east of Bakersfield. In addition the layouts include such famous railroad landmarks as Niles Canyon, Donner Pass, and the Oakland Mole where transcontinental passengers were ferried across San Francisco Bay from their arriving trains. For December, the trains and layouts will be decorated for the holidays.

\$3 general; \$2 seniors and children under age 12; \$7 family maximum; free to all Saturday. Saturday and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. Miller-Knox Regional Shoreline, 900 Dorman Drive, Point Richmond. 510-234-4884 or www.gsम्म.org.

HALL OF HEALTH — "This Is Your Heart" ongoing. An interactive exhibit on heart health. "Good Nutrition," ongoing. This exhibit

includes models for making balanced meals and an exercise cycle for calculating how calories are burned.

"Draw Your Own Insides," ongoing. Human-shaped chalkboards and models with removable organs allow visitors to explore the inside of their bodies. "Your Cellular Self and Cancer Prevention," ongoing. An exhibit on understanding how cells become cancerous and how to detect and prevent cancer.

Suggested \$3 donation; free children under 3. Tuesday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. 2230 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-549-1564 or www.hallofhealth.org.

JUDAH L. MAGNES MUSEUM — The museum's permanent collection includes objects of Jewish importance including ceremonial art, film and video, folk art and fine art, paintings, sculptures and prints by contemporary and historic artists.

"Brought to Light: The Storied Collections of the Judah L. Magnes Museum," through April 25. An exhibit that includes 130 objects drawn from the museum's archives, library and

collections. Works featured include a recovered Torah Ark from the Queen Mary ocean liner, documents from the Spanish Inquisition, a drawing by Albert Einstein and works by Marc Chagall.

Free. Sunday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. 2911 Russell St., Berkeley. 510-549-6950 or www.magnes.org.

MILLS COLLEGE ART MUSEUM —

CLOSED THROUGH JAN. 12. Jennifer Bartlett and Elizabeth Murray, through March 7. A major exhibit of paintings by two alumni. The exhibit will be closed for winter break from Dec. 15 through Jan. 12.

Free. Tuesday, Thursday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Wednesday, 11 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. 5000 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland. 510-430-2164 or www.mills.edu/MCAM/mcam-home.html.

OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA — "The Art of David Ireland: The Way Things Are," through March 14. An exhibit of 80 works created by the West Coast artist between 1972 and 2002 including four large-scale installations,

30 sculptures and 47 wall pieces.

The Art of Fred Martin, 1946-2003. An exhibit of paintings on paper and canvas that spans 30 years and includes 135 works by and writer Fred Martin.

Online Museum. Through 4 p.m. Explore the museum on videotapes in the permanent library.

Docent Gallery Tours. Sunday, 1:30 p.m.

Art's a Little, ongoing. A variety of speakers, including one aspect of the permanent collection.

12:30 p.m. Free with admission.

\$8 general; \$5 seniors and free children age 5 and all on the second Sunday of the month. Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. First Friday of the month, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. CLOSED DEC. 31.

Oak St., Oakland. 510-835-7000 or www.museumca.org.

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pointed trustee as set forth below, of all right, title and interest conveyed and now held by the trustee in the hereinafter described property under and pursuant to a Deed to be described below. The Deed will be made, but without covenant or warranty, expressed or implied, relating title, possession, encumbrances, to pay the principal sum of (note) secured by the Deed of Trust, with interest and late charges thereon, provided in the notes, and under the terms of the Deed of Trust, interest, fees, charges and expenses of the Trust, or the total amount (at the time of the interest)

ed Trustee: Law Off.
of Les Zieve Deed of
t recorded 8/22/2002

Page 41 Official Re-
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Emergency exit to the Ala-
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Fallon St. Oakland, CA
Unit of unpaid balance
other charges:
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Beneficiary reserves the right to bid less than the debt owed, it is possible at the time of the sale opening bid may be less

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 Offices of Les Zieve, as Trustee
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714-573-1965 Non Sale
Information: 714-848-9272
ie Gregg, Paralegal
633 124

Order 87223-S.T.S. No. 091 Loan No. 32965. You are in default under a Deed of Trust, dated May 28, 2003, unless you take action to protect your property, it may be sold at a public sale. If you do not accept the action of the proceeding nisi you, you should consult a lawyer. On January 14, 2004, at 10:00 AM, the Trust Acceptance Company, Inc. as duly appointed trustee under and pursuant to the deed of Trust recorded on March 31, 2003 as Instrument No. 03-145422 of the Records of Contra Costa County, State of California, executed by Brian Person, will sell at public auction to highest bidder the property at 10101 E. 12th St. in lawful money of the United States at the Court

in the property situated in said County and State described as Lot 28, block 2, map of wall's addition, March 22, 1909, map book 2, page 30, Contra Costa County Records. APN-075-015-0. The street address and other common

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The undersigned caused
a Notice of Default and

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in the county where the
property is located.
Prore Acceptance Comp:
Inc., as said Trustee,
11 W. Olympic Boule-
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310-266-0600 - Direct Line

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1. Dude, Where's My Country?, Michael Moore \$24.95. Fresh on the heels of his runaway bestseller "Stupid White Men," Moore returns with a bold but hilarious act of sedition as he seeks to overthrow the "Thief in Chief" and effect the kind of grass-roots change that will shake the country.

2. Lies & the Lying Liars Who Tell Them, Al Franken \$24.95. Once again, the author of "Rush Limbaugh Is a Big Fat Idiot and Other Observations" trains his subversive wit directly on the contemporary political scene, leaving the powers-that-be in tatters and his audience in hysterics.

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6. Under the Banner of Heaven, Jon Krakauer \$26.

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9. The World According to Mr. Rogers, Fred Rogers \$16.95. From the late Fred Rogers comes a timeless collection of wisdom on love, friendship, respect, individuality and honesty — a testament to his legacy as a role model to millions.

10. Living to Tell the Tale, Gabriel Garcia Marquez \$26.95. From the Nobel Laureate writer Marquez comes a magnificent piece of writing that finds him telling the story of his life from his birth in 1927 through his career as a writer.

— Northern California Independent Booksellers Association



Rock on

KNOW ANY COMEDIAN who names his show the "Black Union Tour" is not going to spend a lot of time mincing his words. And that's certainly the case with Chris Rock, the latest in a line of big-name comic talents to bring a stand-up show to the Bay Area. Rock takes the stage Jan. 2 for the first of three shows at the famed Paramount Theatre. Chris Rock performs 7:30-10:30 p.m. Jan. 2 and 7 p.m. Jan. 4 at the Paramount Theatre, Broadway, Oakland. Tickets are \$39.75-\$55.75. Contact 925-8497, www.ticketmaster.com or www.paramounttheatre.com.



RING IN THE NEW YEAR, literally, at the Asian Art Museum's Japanese New Year's Bell Ringing Ceremony in the city.



DRAW ON FUN during First Night Martinez, a family event, including getting your caricature done.

Eve

FROM PAGE C10

■ **Tommy T's Comedy House** — New Year's Eve with John Witherspoon, Darren Carter and Daniel Dugar, 7:30 and 9:30 p.m. \$90-\$120. 1655 B Willow Pass Road, Concord. 925-686-6809, www.tommyts.com.

■ **USS Hornet Museum** — New Year's Eve Dance, "A Starlight Affair" with a musical tribute to Benny Goodman, 8 p.m. Featuring the American Swing Orchestra. \$75-\$150. Pier 3, Alameda. 510-521-8448, www.uss-hornet.org.

■ **Yoshi's** — New Year's Eve Celebration with Pancho Sanchez Band, 9 p.m. With special guests Joey DeFrancesco and Fred Wesley. \$100. 510 Embarcadero West, Oakland. 510-238-9200, www.yoshis.com.

San Francisco

■ **Asian Art Museum** — Japanese New Year's Bell Ringing Ceremony, 11 a.m. Witness a 2,100-pound, 16th century Japanese bronze bell being struck 108 times. Civic Center, 200 Larkin St., S.F. 415-581-3500, www.asianart.org.

■ **Bimbo's 365 Club** — Casino Royale, Tom Jonesing, Kitty Kitty Bang Bang Burlesque, DJ California Kid, the Girl in the Fish Bowl, 9 p.m. \$55. 1025 Columbus Ave., S.F. 415-474-0365, 925-762-2277, www.bimbos365club.com.

■ **Biscuits and Blues** — Rock in the New Year with Lee Rocker, 8 and 10:30 p.m. Call for ticket prices. 401 Mason St., S.F. 415-292-2583.

■ **Will Durst and Friends' Big Fat Year End Kiss Off Comedy Show** — 7 and 10 p.m. Comedy with Will and Debi Durst, Johnny Steele and Michael Bossier. \$25-\$40. Cowell Theatre, Fort Mason Center, Buchanan Street at Marina Boulevard, S.F. 415-345-7575.

■ **The Fillmore** — The Les Claypool Frog Brigade, 9 p.m. \$55. The Fillmore, 1805 Geary Blvd., S.F. 925-685-8497, www.ticketmaster.com, www.thefillmore.com.

■ **Hyatt Regency San Francisco** — Dance Party 2003, 8 p.m. With live music by the Village People. \$75. For ages 21 and older. 5 Embarcadero Center, S.F. 415-675-6230, 925-685-8497, www.hyattsf.com.

■ **Palace of Fine Arts** — Comedy Countdown, featuring Greg Proops, Maria Bamford, Greg Behrendt, Patton Oswalt, Tom Rhodes, Lee Vilemsky Trio, 9:30 p.m. \$60-\$65. 925-685-8497, www.ticketmaster.com.

■ **Slim's** — Supersuckers, 9 p.m. \$30. 333 11th St., S.F. 415-522-0333, www.slims-sf.com.

■ **Victorian Englander House** — "Waltzes and Wildness New Year's Eve Gala," 10:30 p.m. Featuring Seth Montfort, Steven Bailey, Marc Steiner and others on piano. \$20-\$25. 807 Franklin St., S.F. 415-362-6080, www.victorianenglanderhouse.com.

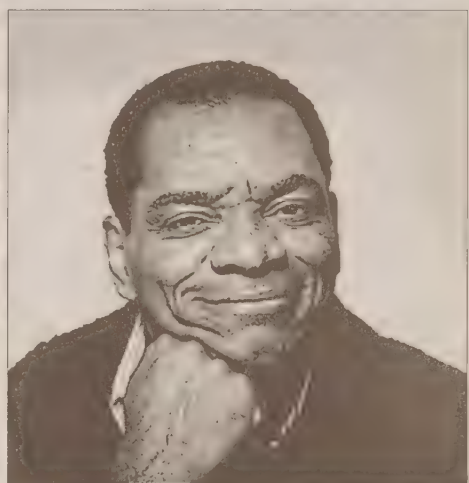
■ **Warfield** — The Grayboy Allstars, Karl Denson, Robert Walter, Elgin Park, Chris Stillwell, Zak Najor, the Bad Plus, 9 p.m. \$70. 982 Market St.,

S.F. 925-685-8497, www.ticketmaster.com.

Elsewhere

■ **Napa Valley Opera House** — The Four Dads, 7 and 10 p.m. Featuring stand-up comedians Milt Abel, Tim Bedore, Kelly McDonald and Dan St. Paul. \$15-\$40. 1030 Main St., Napa. 707-226-7372, www.nvoh.com, www.standupdads.com.

■ **Monterey Bay Aquarium** — New



LAUGH IT UP with John Witherspoon and company at Tommy T's in Concord.

Year's Eve Celebration, 9 p.m.-1 a.m. A dance party amongst the sea creatures, featuring music by Larry Lynch and the Mob. \$40-\$130. 886 Cannery Row, Monterey. 831-647-6877, www.montereybayaquarium.org

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Arts & Leisure

Friday, December 26, 2003



BILL MANN
Multimedia Notes

A look at year's best in media

WITH CHRISTMAS OVER, it's time for more "gifts." Here's my 20th annual list of the Bests in Bay Area and national media. (Next week's Worst lists is much harder to compile; there are so many more choices.)

Best Local Newscast: "The 10:00 News," KTVU. Start with top-flight reporters like Bob MacKenzie (the best feature reporter in local TV) and Randy Shandobil (quite possibly the top TV political reporter in the state). Then add several other fine reporters plus solid anchors like Dennis Richmond and Leslie Griffith, and it's no surprise that this newscast consistently gets the highest ratings.

Best Local TV Anchors: Pam Moore, Brian Hackney and Catherine Heenan (KRON), Ken Bastida (KPX). All are solid pros, a pleasure to watch.

Best Local Radio Station: KQED-FM, which not only leads the way in NPR's soaring popularity by posting NPR's highest ratings anywhere, but earlier this year, KQED even snatched away commercial radio's most valued prize — the 25-to-54 demo ratings title.

Best Radio Commentator: Hands down — Seattle-based Dave Ross, whose funny and apolitical daily takes on the news are heard here on KCBS (740 AM) each day at 2:35 p.m.

Best Network Newscast: "ABC World News Tonight." Thanks to internationalist Peter Jennings, ABC often has more overseas stories than CBS and NBC combined.

Most Valuable Newscast: "BBC World News," KQED-Channel 9 at 4 p.m. weekdays. During the Iraq war, it was little surprise this newscast's ratings soared as viewers were turned off by the flag-waving brand of "journalism."

Best Live Local TV: KRON sports anchor Gary Radnich's puckish, mostly ad-libbed segments at 9:57 and 11:27 weeknights.

Funniest Show on TV: "The Daily Show With John Stewart." "Daily" has been a tonic this year. Stewart is the funniest guy on TV, and Lewis Black's peevish segments are usually hilarious on this faux-newscast.

Best Series: "The Sopranos" and "Six Feet Under" (HBO). Also: "The Office" (BBC America); "The Simpsons" and "Arrested Development" (Fox); "Life With Bonnie" (ABC); "Joan of Arcadia" (CBS).

Best Miniseries: "Angels in America," HBO.

Best News Series: "Frontline," "NOW With Bill Moyers," and "Newshour" (PBS).

Best Local Music-Radio Personality: Jack Kulp, KOIT (morning drive).

Best Local Radio News Anchor: Steve Little, KCBS (weeknights) a true pro.

Best Pipes: Ed Baxter (KGO).

Best Local Radio Talk Host: The thoughtful, informed and refreshingly nonconfrontational Michael Krasny, host of KQED's "Forum."

Class Act: KCBS commentator Al Hart.

Best Local TV Reporters: Noel Cisneros and Greg Lyon (KRON); Rita Williams, Tom Vacar, Craig Heaps, Lloyd LaCuesta, Rob Roth (KTVU).

Best Daytime Show: "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" (KNTV, 4 p.m.).

Most Accurate Local Forecaster: Steve Paulson, KTVU mornings.

Best Local Radio Sports-Talk Host: Rod Brooks, KNBR 1050.

Best Bay Area Play-by-Play Man: Jon Miller, Giants voice. Honorary mention: Greg Papa, Raiders; Bill King, A's.

Best TV Sports Anchor: KRON's Radnich.

Best Cable Channel: The History Channel.

Best TV Observer: The Onion, which says ABC is planning new series next year called "Extreme Explosions" and "America's Shiniest Objects."

Reach Bill Mann at News-mann@sonic.net.

Duo stirs souls with Celtic sounds

■ Pam Swan and Shira Kammen play music that was preserved in Nova Scotia's Cape Breton, and dancing is inevitable

By Brian Kluepfel
CORRESPONDENT

BERKELEY — The music of the British Isles made a strange and unexpected migration in the 18th and 19th centuries. A confluence of political and economic pressures forced Scots highlanders in particular across the Atlantic, where one of the first stops was Cape Breton, in what became known as Nova Scotia, or New Scotland.

Partly because of its geographic isolation, Cape Breton preserved the musical traditions of its new inhabitants in a near-vacuum for decades, even centuries. While Scottish music back home evolved with new influences, Cape Breton tunes, like the particular flavor of Gaelic spoken by the settlers, remained in a rarefied, more pure state.

The Cape Breton sound co-exists easily with other traditions from Galicia to the highlands in the California Celtic music of Pam Swan and Shira Kammen.

The duo, each of whom has spent a lifetime working her way out of a day job and into full-time musicianship, joined forces two years ago at the annual California Revels and found they shared a common sense of humor and musical leanings. The partnership soon bore fruit, with the 2002 release of "Wild Wood," a debut album that pays tribute to Celtic-influenced fiddle and piano music from Galicia to Cape Breton. Nova Scotia composer Jerry Holland's "Brenda Stubbert's Reel" kicks off the final medley, "Girls' Night Out."

Swan, who spent last summer on the Isle of Egg in Scotland researching Scots mouth music, was touched by the muse from an early age. She studied classical music as a child, and her first post-college living arrangement was with an Irish immigrant family in the hills of Tennessee.

She brings an educator's zeal (she just left her position at the California Academy of Sciences) and a drummer's rhythmic sensibilities to performance, playing the bodhran, a shallow, handheld drum, and a variety of hand percussion instruments in addition to piano.



SHIRA KAMMEN and Pam Swan bring their Cape Breton music to the Freight & Salvage this Saturday.

IF YOU GO

WHAT: Shira Kammen and Pam Swan play Celtic fiddle and dance tunes

WHERE: Freight & Salvage Coffee House, 1111 Addison St., Berkeley

WHEN: Saturday, Dec. 27, at 7:30 p.m.

TICKETS: \$15.50 advance or \$16.50 at the door. www.the-freight.org or 510 548 1761

a little bit of the melody," Swan said.

Kammen, whose fiddling graces other East Bay groups such as Panacea and the Modal Citizens, lays the melody lines over Swan's steady chord patterns.

Whether it's for a nightclub audience watching the musicians' every move or a club full of dancers, Cape Breton music is about getting the crowd's feet moving.

"If we're doing our job right, people may be sitting down but they're not sitting still!" Swan said with a laugh.

Kammen and Swan were warmly received at this sum-

mer's Celtic Colours Festival in Cape Breton.

Swan called the audiences there "amazing" for their participation in the music.

"They're good listeners," she said. The duo also took the opportunity to mine the rich post-festival sessions for some new tunes for their repertoire.

So, if you find yourself at the Freight & Salvage Coffee House in Berkeley on Saturday night, and you feel the need to clear a bit of space in the back for dancing, the Cottars and Kammen and Swan surely won't mind. It's a Cape Breton thing — they understand.

Get out, experience this New Year's eve

LET THE COUNTDOWN BEGIN: For some, the hours leading up to the New Year's Eve countdown are the most dreaded of the season. The stress of planning a night, paying for it, rallying friends to get off the couch (not to mention whom to kiss at midnight) convince many to resign themselves to an evening at home. Watching Dick Clark on the tube isn't so bad, you tell yourself.

Oh, pshaw! Try to have some fun on New Years this time around. Below is a listing of events taking place around the Bay Area on Dec. 31.

East Bay

■ **Ashkenaz** — New Year's Eve Balkan Bash with Zabaval, Izvorno, Anoush, Joe and Leslie Finn and Edessa, 8 p.m. \$18. 1317 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley. 510-525-5054, www.ashkenaz.com.

■ **The Bay Area Blues Society** — Tri-Valley New Year's Eve Bash, 9 p.m.-1 a.m., featuring the Caravan of Allstars. \$65-\$150. The Courtyard by Marriott-Livermore, 2929 Constitution Drive, Livermore. 510-836-2227.

■ **First Night Martinez** — 3 p.m.-midnight. A no-alcohol family event featuring live entertainment, a People's Procession, the marTEENez Idol Singing Competition, children's activities, fireworks at midnight and more. \$4-\$10. Downtown Martinez. 925-372-8295, www.firstnightmartinez.org.

■ **International House** — The Top Hat Waltz Ball, 9 p.m.-12:30 a.m. Dancing, decorations and dress evoking the time period of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. \$20-\$25. 2299 Piedmont, Berkeley. www.FridayNightWaltz.com.

■ **Joaquin Miller Community Center** — "Your Body, Your Health, Your Responsibility, Your Choice," 7:30 p.m.-12:30 a.m. With health and fit-



CHECK OUT the Village People in all their cheesy glory at the Hyatt Regency San Francisco's Dance Party 2003.

ness advocate Gloria Kamil as host. \$75. 3594 Sanborn Ave., Oakland. 510-654-6629.

■ **La Peña** — New Year's Eve with Orquesta la Moderna Tradicion, 9:30 p.m. \$20-\$22. 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-849-2568, www.lapena.org.

■ **New Year's Eve Animal Sleep-over** — 8 p.m.-10 a.m. Jan. 1. A family event sleep-over with campfire stories and visits with wildlife. For ages 5 and older. \$35. Sulphur Creek Nature

Center, 1801 D. St., Hayward. 510-881-6700.

■ **Oakland Arena** — The Dead, 7 p.m. With the Funk Brothers and Robert Hunter. Show also plays Dec. 30. \$45-\$75. 7000 Coliseum Way, Oakland. 925-762-2277, www.tickets.com.

■ **Professionals Guild** — New Year's Eve Party, 8:30 p.m.-1 a.m. A singles party featuring Roni and the Flight. \$59-\$69. Marriott Hotel, 2600

Bishop Drive, San Ramon. 916-786-5858, www.pguild.com.

■ **San Francisco Chamber Orchestra** — "A Musical New Year's Party," 8 p.m. Featuring mezzo-soprano Sally Porter Munro, violinist Evie Chen and director Benjamin Simon. \$20-\$50 donation. First Congregational Church, 2345 Channing Way, Berkeley. 415-392-4400, www.sfchamberorchestra.org.

See EVE, Page C9

Last gifts delightful

THE Christmas season is a time to turn the tables and give the gifts that give you a warm glow. That's why you'll find a sweater that's knuckle-snuggly.

Looking for a last-minute gift? Getting just what you need for Christmas? Here's a sampler of a few of the best treats still left under the tree.

Kids' special: Oakland Theater is presenting "The Willow Weep for Me" by Kenneth Gurnee. Berkeley and Oakland branches through Dec. 31. Shows are free.

As fall turns to winter, bored Mole impudently searches for Badger in the depths of the forest. Gets lost, can his friends in the audience help?

Call 510-534-8828 for local library branch and times.

YEAR-END KISS to mock and scoff at taste? Political comedy Durst and the usual are bringing their Fat Year-End Kiss Show XI to a couple venues Saturday and Sunday. The hilarious one-stand-up and put-down at 8 p.m. Saturday at Mann Theatre. Regional Center, Walnut Creek. Tickets reserved seating. \$12. SHOW (7469).

Same cast, naughty show (unless someone wickedly funny happens twentimenties) goes on Sunday at the Alala Met. for the Arts. \$10. Alala, Berkeley. Donation is \$17. Call 857-5100.

ANTHONY Had your fill of Tony Cratchit? Meet the "The Best Christmas Ever" by Barbara Haning this weekend with manes at 8 tonight and day and 2 p.m. Sunday. Hall Theatre, 3530 Moraga Road.

The Herdman can steal, smoke cigars and girls), talk dirty, but oh they're bad. Anthony Herdman had great Christmas story.

So, naturally they invade the church and take over the Christmas pageant. To think everyone else is living. If Scrooge so can this passel of...

Tickets are \$20 Saturday, \$17 Sunday. \$2 if you're a senior and under get in for \$1. 925-283-1557.

RINSING OUT How about a nostalgic musical after the holiday?

"Suds: The Musical Soap Opera" is up for the performances next week. forma Conservatory, San Leandro.

Written by Steve Gunness. Scott, the show. Friday, Jan. 2, 3 p.m. on Jan. 3, 7 p.m. on Jan. 4.

Tickets are \$10 for seniors and 510-632-8880.

The story: One McDermant's birthday working mat and feeling a guardian angel (Manor) and Dec. 31. Keller drop by in Cindy's line work scenes and songs.

many other characters played by Roni. The theater is St. San Leandro with adjacent parking. 510-632-8880.

Send theater Jack Tuckey, County Times, Drive, Richmond.

Friday Auto Plus

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Friday, December 26, 2003

Section D

DAVE VAN SICKLE
Down the Road

Chrysler group moves up to premium status

MOTOR MATTERS
According to Mike Perugi, Chrysler's senior manager of car marketing, it's certainly no secret imports have cut heavily into U.S. car and truck market, but impact has been felt most heavily on passenger car sales.

While the domestics devoted a lot of their development resources on truck and SUV production, the Asian and European automakers took advantage of the domestics' lack of focus on cars to take a huge share of the pure car market.

During the past 10 years, domestic truck sales have skyrocketed, but the Chrysler Group's share of the domestic car market, albeit slightly small, has held fairly steady. Now, Chrysler is fighting back with new products that, they say, outpace cars that are bigger, better, more powerful, and more stylish than their import competitors.

For the moment, let's put aside what GM and Ford are planning for the near future and take a look at what's coming from the Chrysler Group.

Perugi tells us that the Chrysler Group is taking a different approach in capturing the car market. He says that Chrysler is mainstream to move in the process of moving to a premium brand.

The move up started in 2002 with the introduction of the Chrysler PT. It offers lots of room in a compact package with plenty of convenience features.

See ROAD, Page D2



THE NEW TOYOTA PRIUS uses Hybrid Synergy Drive to generate power and get fuel economy of 60 miles per gallon in city driving.

MOTOR MATTERS

2004 Toyota Prius more powerful than its predecessor

MOTOR MATTERS

Looking for fuel economy in a clean running mid-size sedan that has good power plus interior roominess at a reasonable price? Look at the 2004 Toyota Prius.

This is the second-generation of a great idea that Toyota introduced a few years ago, but which never received good response because it was underpowered.

The new Prius uses a combination of power generated by either a gasoline engine or an electric motor. For this reason, the Prius gets excellent mileage without polluting

the atmosphere.

The 2004 Prius has what Toyota calls Hybrid Synergy Drive, a third-generation electric-gas hybrid powertrain technology.

It can deliver 60 miles per gallon in city driving (51 mpg on the highway) and is much more capable of passing another car than its predecessor.

Incidentally, this engine has received best-in-class in both fuel economy and emission performance and is the recipient of numerous automotive awards. This new engine uses its 1.5-liter

TOM KEANE
Keane on Wheels

four-cylinder gasoline engine that produces a mere 76 horsepower — whether using gas or electric power — or the 50 kW electric drive motor, but I could never determine which mode it was in. It has good power under any circumstance.

The Prius has a unique way of starting and stopping the engine. After inserting a key of unusual de-

sign into a slot, simply push the power switch to start the engine.

To shut the engine off, the same power switch must be pushed and in both cases the foot has to be on the brake pedal. It is extremely easy to shift into forward or reverse — and that's all there is to it.

Another unique feature of the Prius is the location of the instrumentation panel. Instead of being under the steering wheel, it is located just under the windshield so it can be easily seen while driving.

A 7-inch touch-panel display monitor in the central dash panel

area makes the instrumentation for the sound, climate control, and navigational information convenient to operate.

When not in use, the display light goes out providing better vision of the road, especially at night. There are also controls for some of these functions on the steering wheel, but that's not unique.

The base price of the Prius is \$19,995, but there are numerous options. The navigational system is one of them.

See KEANE, Page D2

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The cause for chirping noise is elusive

Q I have a '94 Explorer, which I enjoy very much. In the past two years a sound has developed that no one — and I mean no one — seems to be able to fix.

It only occurs when it is cold outside. The sound comes from behind the dash area in front of the driver. It is a chirping type sound.

It starts when I have increased the speed past 40 miles per hour. After about two miles it seems to quit.

I have had the fan belt replaced twice and the speedometer cable has been replaced. The water pump also has been replaced.

I hope that you might give me some suggestions. This will probably go into the Guinness Book of World Records for frustration.

— Ron Rounds

A Abnormal noises can be very difficult to diagnose, even when hearing the sound firsthand.

I once entered a customer's just-purchased new vehicle and found a note instructing me to play the included audiotape, which contained the offending sound and the customer's narration of the accompanying road conditions.

Even with this helpful assistance, it took

BRAD BERGHOLDT
Auto Q&A

some time to find the cause — an empty Sangria bottle entombed within a section of the rear quarter panel. Removal required breaking the bottle and vacuuming out the pieces.

Let's try a few things that might narrow the source of your offending noise.

When the chirping occurs, do you see any accompanying movement in the speedometer needle? If so, the speedometer cable is the prime suspect.

Does the noise change as the Explorer accelerates, brakes or turns? If so, then it might be caused by an engine component or hose rubbing against the body.

On a straight, deserted section of road at 50 mph, slip the gearshift into neutral and shut off the engine momentarily. Does the noise continue?

If so, it again may be caused by a faulty speedometer cable. If not, it's likely caused by engine-body interference. (Be sure to restart the engine and re-select "Drive" before attempting to brake or turn.)

You mentioned the speedometer cable had been replaced. Was this an attempt to cure the noise, or for another reason?

Was the new cable properly routed? If any of its bends are too tight in radius, this can contribute to cable noise and needle bounce. I'd also consider lubricating the cable shaft (if it can be removed from the sheath) with a slightly heavier lubricant.

Update: Our current high-mileage, original-engine champ is Peary Kraft's '93 Ford F250 pickup with 350,000 miles. Peary believes regular maintenance is the key to the truck's excellent service. Keep those stories coming in.

Reader suggestions for our trunk emergency kit: Brenda adds a pair of gloves and some wire (for securing a broken tailpipe).

Ken includes a disposable camera (to record accident details), a permanent marker and paper, and a poncho.

Dale suggests a pocketknife with a bottle opener and wine cork puller (might as well enjoy yourself while waiting for help to arrive). Finally, John recommends some basic tools in order to change that broken drive belt.

Brad Bergholdt teaches automotive technology at Evergreen Valley College in San Jose, Calif. E-mail him at under-the-hood@juno.com or write to him in care of Drive, Mercury News, 750 Ridder Park Drive, San Jose, Calif. 95190. He cannot make personal replies.

Road

FROM PAGE D1

The Chrysler Crossfire, introduced in mid-2003, is a low-slung, two-seat sports coupe with a sculptured appearance. Under its hood is a 3.2-liter, 90-degree V6, 18-valve SOHC engine, available with a six-speed manual or five-speed automatic transmission.

Perhaps the boldest move from Chrysler is the 2005 300C, a car that represents the brand's entry into the premium rear-wheel drive sedan segment. It's a combination of German and American engineering, using some of the best components from Mercedes-Benz and Chrysler. As such, it's an unabashed, full-sized, fully-powered, leather-upholstered, well-mannered, and stylish premium sedan.

Most noteworthy is the return of the "HEMI" engine. One of the most powerful V8s of all time, the HEMI quickly became legend in the 1950s and 1960s, stunning the racing world and propelling Chrysler to the top during the muscle car era.

Designers at Chrysler are competing in the premium segment, meant a return to rear-wheel drive. Lots of power could be a drawback of torque, acceleration, and handling. Now the 300C, with its 150-hp V8 engine, is combined with a five-speed automatic transmission, traction control, and stability control, a sign of the premium imports.

But for those more interested in a high-tech, futuristic, and futuristic life by the home, there's the Magnum, a totally new concept of our old-timey would-be sports wagon. It's a really big, sleek hatchback with seating for four of room for "stuff" in the back.

And, it's state-of-the-art V8 HEMI engine, five-speed automatic transmission and a choice of rear-wheel drive. For those who want HEMI's rip-roaring performance or 2.7-liter V6 engine is available with a four-speed automatic transmission. Regardless of how you drive, Chrysler Group is on a roll.

Keane

FROM PAGE D1

My tester had a \$2,255 package that included an intermittent rear window wiper, driver and passenger side curtain airbags, vehicle stability control, fog lamps and HID headlights. Another \$184 for carpets and cargo mats, plus \$515 for shipping and handling, and the total came to \$2,949.

The standard equipment includes many

features — such as automatic climate control, a six-speaker sound system, remote keyless entry, and cruise control — that make the all-new Prius much more desirable than its predecessor.

There's plenty of room for five adults and the 60/40 fold flat rear seats will come in handy when hauling cargo. Because of its short turning radius, the Prius is very maneuverable and easy to park in tight spaces.

On the road, the interior noise level is low

and the ride is quite comfortable. Although my tester didn't have this option, there is a feature called Smart Entry and Start.

As you walk up to the car with the key in your pocket, the car recognizes you and automatically unlocks the door. No need to insert the key, merely push the start button, and away you go.

With its great mileage and all its unique innovations, the Prius is ready to go, and that's what will probably occur with its sales: This time around, it's a winner.

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BY MARIA GALLAGHER

The leaves haven't begun to change, but I've already seen one sure sign that autumn is almost at our doorstep.

At my neighborhood supermarket, a bountiful display of seasonal produce is being showcased. I see apples, pears, and grapes. I see pumpkins and gourds. I see squash and zucchini. I see... well, you get the idea.

And the January... well, you get the idea.

And the January... well, you get the idea.



BROWN BAG LUNCHES don't have to be limited to peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. With some creativity, you can enjoy a healthy, delicious meal on the go. Don't forget the utensils, and use real napkins, please.

From haute cuisine to haute couture,
Shopping Plus every Friday.

HILLS NEWSPAPERS

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THE PIEDMONTER • ALAMEDA JOURNAL

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And
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Real Estate & Home

Weekly Home Sales Maintain your focus on the East Bay real estate scene (B7)
Open Home Outside See what's on sale in your neighborhood (B8)
Now is the time to prepare
to the real estate (B9)

Victorian Architecture at its finest

**There's no place
like home.**

**Real Estate
& Home,
every Friday**

Employment

**GENERAL
Assemblers/Warehouse
Workers Wanted!**
Dynamic medical equipment company is seeking reliable and professional individuals who are eager to find a stable opportunity. Exp. working with electronics parts assembly OR in a warehouse environment are required. The warehouse positions require lifting up to 50 lbs. All interested must have reliable transportation and have strong work ethic. To apply please call:
Barrett Business Services
2380 Salvio St. Ste. 300
Concord, CA 94520
925-827-5627

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**GARAGE SALE AD
TODAY!**
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PHYSICIAN & SURGEON CAREER/PRACTICE OPPORTUNITIES

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Corrections is Hiring Now!**
We have 32 locations statewide

**CHIEF PHYSICIAN & SURGEON -
EARN UP TO \$10,361* PER MO.
PHYSICIAN & SURGEON -
EARN UP TO \$10,649* PER MO.
*PLUS \$200 PER MONTH
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RETENTION BONUS**

Some of our generous benefits include:
California Public Employees' Retirement
System (Safety); Physicians are exempt
from paying into the Federal Social
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Desirable qualifications: B/C by the
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Family Practice or Internal Medicine;
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1-888-232-4584 or visit our website
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Employment

**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY LINE
WORKERS NEEDED /
LOTS OF OVERTIME**
Large industrial Chemical
company in Bay Point is
seeking hard working as-
sembly line workers to
join their team on a Temp
& 24 hr shifts. Weekends
avail. Immediate Exp. & CDL
call: 925-937-2018
Web ID CC1214549436

HOSPITAL SECURITY Mgr
Exp. pref. 18hr. Bnfts.
Fax resume 927-825-8477
Web ID CC1213538482

GLAZIER exp'd. residen-
tial. gd. DMV. call 925-
284-9510; fax 284-1178

**HAIR stylist/Asst., upscale
salon, dwn. W.C. F/T,
bnfts., 925-256-9914**

**HAIRSTYLIST F/T & P/T &
Mngmnt pos. avail. Cost
Cutters 510-821-9277**

Employment

HAIR STYLIST: P/T Brent-
wood, station for rent.
Contact 925-286-6257

HEALTHCARE help seniors
& earn great pay w/ bene-
fits. Eldercare Services is
seeking caregivers for 12
& 24 hr shifts. Weekends
avail. Immediate Exp. & CDL
call: 925-937-2018
Web ID CC1214549436

HOTEL
Marriott.
**San Ramon, Pleasant Hill
and Pleasanton**
• Housekeeper
• Housekeeping Aide
• Room Service Server
• Restaurant Server
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• Loss Prevention Officer
• Audio Visual Technician
• Customer Service Agent
• PT Front Desk Clerk
We offer great bnfts as
well as career opportuni-
ties for a lifetime. F/T/P/T
positions open. Free bus
passes. Call 925-244-6134
Creek & Dublin BART
to set up an interview.
EOE/M/F/D/V

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FIND IT NOW
CHECK THE
CLASSIFIEDS**

Employment

HVAC JOURNEYMAN: Resi-
dential replacement in-
stallers only need apply.
Great company, progres-
sive, growth oriented, the
place to build a career.
Top pay, great bnfts. and
have fun along the way.
Ask us about the 9% bi-
dollar sign on bonus. Call
today 1-800-267-8808, ask
for Larry Woods.

**HVAC Service &
Installation Technician**
If you're grt. technically,
EPA certified & love to
communicate w/ people,
75K to 100K awaits you
(proof avail.) Min 5 yrs
exp. Our team also has
opening for first year tech
technicians to build
our service dept.
• Co. Paid bnfts
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HVAC-Svc. & Install Techn.
Yr. rnd. wk. Pd. bnfts/hol.
90-100% Wkly. Trng. Exp.
Web ID CC1219566093

INSIDE SALES/Associate
Must be aggressive w/
strong closure & multi-
tasking ability for a Cisco
Hardware reseller. Exper.
selling in a high tech in-
dustry w/ knowledge of
Lan/Wan pref. please fax
Resume to: 925-459-2563
or Call: 925-846-7018

INSURANCE exp. lic'd. Agt.
needed for busy Fairfax
Ins. agency. Comp. nego.
Fax resume 925-292-8586
Web ID CC1218553389

Employment

**INSURANCE
Claims Examiner**
The CCC Schools Insur-
ance Group in Pleasanton
has an immediate
opening for a Workers'
Compensation Claims Ex-
aminer. 7-10:30 salary
range: \$3,575-12,500/30
monthly. For more infor-
mation, e-mail jobs@cccsg.org, visit our web-
site at www.cccsg.org, or call the job hotline
at 1 (866) 922-2744 ext. 240

**INSURANCE
SF-based LG** GC is seeking
a RISK MANAGEMENT
ASST. w/ a 4 yr. Business
or Tech. degree & working
knw. of property casualty
insurance matters. Posi-
tion based in Concord. 2
yrs. admin exp. Prof. knw.
of general office proce-
dures & office machines.
• abil. to organize & coor-
dinate group work efforts
EOE. Please apply via
www.swinerton.com
ref. swin-765

**INSURANCE
SF-based LG** GC is seeking
a RISK MANAGEMENT SPE-
CIALIST w/ 3 yrs. in casual-
ty insurance industry man-
aging construction risk
programs. Position based
in Concord. Must have a 4
yr. Business or Tech. de-
gree. 2 yrs. admin exp. in
office procedures & office
machines 65-75wpm. EOE.
Please apply via
www.swinerton.com
ref. swin-767

LEGAL SECRETARY: P/T
Alamo-Danville area. Liti-
gation exp. pref. 20-25hrs
wk. Microsoft Word req.
Call resume 925-831-8854
Web ID CC1214549602

LEGAL SECRETARY: W/C
firm seeks exp'd. secr.
Must type 45 WPM. Bnfts
Fax resume 925-939-1136

Employment

INVESTIGATIONS
Ready to start a career or
change the one you have?
US Investigations Serv-
ices, a leader in National
Security and Public Trust
investigations through-
out the country, can take
your current career
skills, add the training
you need and set you off
on a brighter future as a
professional investigator.

INVESTIGATIONS
If you have the ability to
"talk to anyone" and you
are conscientious, reli-
able, hardworking and ea-
ger to learn, we'd like to
talk to you. To see if you
might be a good match
for this position, please
visit www.usisone.com
assessment/ to take our
online assessment. EOE

JANITORIAL District Rep
to develop new business
in E. Bay area. Service ex-
isting accts. Will provide
mgt. & operational train-
ing to ensure the candi-
date is successful. Pro-
vide vehicle, gas & a 10%
allowance. \$3000. \$1650/mo. EOE
Fax Resume 916-373-1404

LEGAL SECRETARY: P/T
Alamo-Danville area. Liti-
gation exp. pref. 20-25hrs
wk. Microsoft Word req.
Call resume 925-831-8854
Web ID CC1214549602

LEGAL SECRETARY: W/C
firm seeks exp'd. secr.
Must type 45 WPM. Bnfts
Fax resume 925-939-1136

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Shopping Plus

Look inside for local advertising circles every Friday

Tote cuisine, beyond
the bologna sandwich



need to be haute?

**From haute cuisine
to haute couture,
Shopping Plus
every Friday.**

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THE PIEDMONT • ALAMEDA JOURNAL

**Come
grow
with
us!**

Join the leading print
and online media
source in the East Bay.



Opportunities at Contra Costa Newspapers

Major Accounts Manager

Contra Costa Newspapers is seeking a results oriented self-starter with proven sales ability and presentation skills. Media sales and 3-5 years management experience required. Necessary skills include: contract negotiation, financial analysis, coaching and MS Office. Personal contacts with major retailers helpful.

Outside Sales Executives

Contra Costa Newspapers is looking for enthusiastic Advertising Executives to join our Retail, Classified Automotive and Classified Recruitment sales teams. Duties include actively selling and servicing all current advertisers as well as acquiring new advertisers within a specific region. The successful candidates will have advertising sales experience and knowledge of advertising principles. Must be detail and team oriented and possess excellent time management skills.

Key Accounts Executive

Contra Costa Newspapers is seeking a highly motivated, results oriented individual with proven sales ability and presentation skills to sell and service Key Accounts. Must have strong sales background with 3-5 years outside sales experience. Duties include selling and developing new business advertisers and incremental business into CCN products using consultative selling techniques. Computer and internet skills are essential.

Telephone Sales Representatives

Join our team of skilled, classified sales representatives. Responsibilities include selling and processing classified ads via the telephone. Must type 40 wpm, have excellent spelling, grammar and excellent customer service skills. The successful candidate will have previous telemarketing sales experience. Part-time and full-time positions available.

New Business Development Representatives

We are seeking enthusiastic, self-motivated NBD representatives. This full time position will primarily focus on selling into job fairs as well as maintaining existing advertisers. May also interact with national advertising agencies regarding print and online recruitment advertising products and strategies. Must have a proven track record in sales with 3-5 years of experience, knowledge of advertising principles and excellent time management skills.

Vendor Account Executive

The Contra Costa Times is seeking a Vendor Account Executive to join our Co-op sales team. In this role you will be responsible for initiating and selling vendor supported special sections. Duties include using consultative selling techniques, soliciting new business through cold calling and developing sales strategies to meet revenue goals with a focus on selling to non-traditional advertisers. Must have a proven track record in sales with 3-5 years experience, knowledge of advertising principles and excellent time management skills. Computer and Internet experience are required.

Targeted Delivery Specialist

We are looking for a Target Delivery Specialist to join our Business Development team. This position will be responsible for increasing our targeted delivery revenue by generating new sales through the selling of shared mail products such as flyers, coupon books and post-it notes. Duties include soliciting new business through cold calling and developing sales strategies to meet revenue goals. Must have a proven track record in sales with 3-5 years of experience, knowledge of advertising principles and excellent time management skills. Computer and Internet experience are required.

Magazine Account Executive

The Contra Costa Times is seeking a Magazine Account Executive. This position is responsible for developing new revenue streams for our Home & Garden magazine by broadening our current advertising client base. Duties include using consultative selling techniques, soliciting new business through cold calling and targeted leads for our magazine product as well as developing sales strategies to meet revenue goals with a focus on selling advertising plans and contracts. Must have a proven track record in sales with 3-5 years of experience, knowledge of advertising principles and excellent time management skills. Computer and Internet experience are required.

Consumer Sales Manager

Contra Costa Newspapers is seeking a Consumer Sales Manager who will manage all pressure circulation sales, contracting door-to-door sales, stores, event sales and telemarketing. This position will be responsible for achieving budgeted sales goals and benchmarks, implementation and nurturing new retail sales opportunities. The successful candidate will have a minimum of 5 years newspaper circulation experience. Strong direct sales background including a proven record of success in outside sales or telemarketing. Necessary skills include: budgeting, MS Word and Excel and strong interpersonal and communication skills.

**CONTRA COSTA TIMES
HILLS NEWSPAPERS**

www.CONTRACOSTATIMES.COM

Interested applicants for the above positions should send their resumes and cover letters to
Contra Costa Newspapers, 2640 Shadelands Drive, Walnut Creek, CA 94598
or fax to (925) 977-8444 or email jobs@ccntimes.com.

Contra Costa Newspapers is an equal opportunity employer offering competitive wages and a comprehensive flexible benefits package to include 401(k), pension plan, stock purchase plan, credit union, employee discounts, comprehensive training program, and an attractive business environment.

As a Knight Ridder company, Contra Costa Newspapers benefits from the resources of a prestigious national communications company. Knight Ridder offers comprehensive training programs and affiliation with its 32 other dailies and its news, information, graphics and photo services.

HILLS NEWSPAPERS

THE BERKELEY VOICE • THE JOURNAL • THE MONTCLARION
THE PIEDMONT • ALAMEDA JOURNAL

CONTRA COSTA TIMES
VALLEY TIMES
SAN RAMON VALLEY TIMES
WEST COUNTY TIMES

BERKELEY VOICE • THE JOURNAL • MONTCLARION
PIEDMONT • ALAMEDA JOURNAL • HILLS

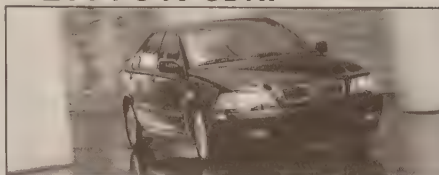
THE BUCK STOPS HERE!
If you're not completely satisfied with parts, service or sales, call from Fairfield at 1-800-700-8515

HYUNDAI OF FAIRFIELD NOW LOCATED IN THE FAIRFIELD AUTO MALL!

VOLVO
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Volvo Of Fairfield
2855 Auto Mall Parkway - Fairfield
1-800-496-0489

2004 S40 SDN.

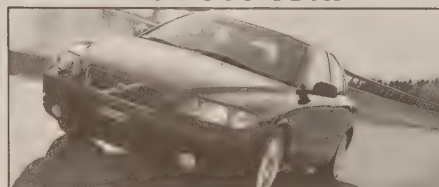


- AUTOMATIC
- MOONROOF
- LEATHER
- PREMIUM PACKAGE
- ALLOY WHEELS

\$5,200 off msrp

all in stock at this discount

2004 S60 SDN.



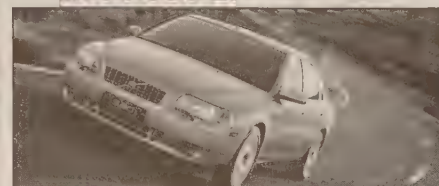
- AUTOMATIC
- LEATHER
- PREMIUM PACKAGE
- ALLOY WHEELS

MSRP \$32,090
BARBER DISCOUNT \$4,302
YOUR PRICE

\$27,788

5 at this price

2004 S80 2.9 ASR SDN.



MSRP \$41,300
BARBER DISCOUNT \$6,412
YOUR PRICE

\$34,888

STK#V40019
VIN#336503

1 at this price

VOLVO OF FAIRFIELD

PRICES PLUS GOVERNMENT FEES AND TAXES. ANY FINANCE CHARGES. ANY DEALER DOCUMENT PREPARATION CHARGE. AND ANY EMISSION TESTING CHARGE. FINANCING SUBJECT TO CREDIT APPROVAL. OFFER EXPIRES 24 HOURS AFTER PUBLICATION.

HYUNDAI

2595 Auto Mall Parkway - Fairfield 1-800-96-0617

AMERICA'S BEST WARRANTY™ PLAN*

- 10-year/100,000-mile Powertrain Protection Limited Powertrain Warranty
- 5-year/60,000-mile Bumper-to-Bumper Coverage
- 5-year/Unlimited-miles 24-hr. Roadside Assistance

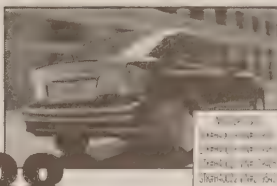
Warranty available for review at dealership

HUGE MOVING SALE!

WE HAVE MOVED OUR SALES & SERVICE TO THE FAIRFIELD AUTO MALL!

2004 ACCENT COUPE

MSRP \$10,604
BARBER DISCOUNT \$2,116
SALE PRICE \$8,488
FACTORY REBATE \$500
NET COST TO YOU



\$7,988 4 AT THIS PRICE

2004 SANTA FE SUV.

MSRP \$18,934
BARBER DISCOUNT \$3,046
SALE PRICE \$15,888
FACTORY REBATE \$1,000
NET COST TO YOU



\$14,888 2 AT THIS PRICE

HYUNDAI OF FAIRFIELD

PRICES PLUS GOVERNMENT FEES AND TAXES. ANY FINANCE CHARGES. ANY DEALER DOCUMENT PREPARATION CHARGE. AND ANY EMISSION TESTING CHARGE. FINANCING SUBJECT TO CREDIT APPROVAL. OFFER EXPIRES 24 HOURS AFTER PUBLICATION.

KIA

3901 Sonoma Blvd - Fairfield
1-800-496-0617

10 YEAR

100,000 MILE WARRANTY PROGRAM

10 YEARS/ 100,000 MILES LIMITED POWERTRAIN WARRANTY
5 YEARS /UNLIMITED MILES 24 HOUR ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE
5 YEARS /50,000 MILES LIMITED BASIC WARRANTY
5 YEARS/ 100,000 MILES ANTI-PERFORATION WARRANTY
* Warranty available for review at dealership.

'04 KIA SEDONA LX MINIVAN

- 7 PASSENGERS
- 5 SPEED AUTOMATIC
- FRONT/REAR AIR CONDITIONER
- AM/FM CD W/ 6 SPEAKERS
- DUAL SLIDING DOORS



MSRP \$20,615
BARBER DISCOUNT \$1,027
SALE PRICE \$19,588
PRE-HOLIDAY REBATE \$1,000
FACTORY REBATE \$1,000
NET COST TO YOU

\$17,588

'04 KIA RIO SEDAN

ALL WITH CD PLAYER



BARBER DISCOUNT \$1000
FACTORY REBATE \$500
NET COST TO YOU

\$1500

26 AT THESE SAVINGS

SPECIAL FINANCE MANAGER ON DUTY
FOR CREDIT PROBLEM CUSTOMERS SUCH AS DIVORCE, BANKRUPTCY, BAD CREDIT, SLOW CREDIT, COLLECTIONS AND JUDGEMENTS ON APPROVED CREDIT. CALL DIRECT 707-636-2288

BARBER KIA

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TOYOTA

2575 Auto Mall Parkway - Fairfield
1-888-343-0249

DECEMBER SALES EVENT

'04 COROLLAS

0% APR FOR 36 MONTHS ON APPROVED CREDIT

0% APR FOR 36 MONTHS AT \$27.78 PER MONTH PER \$1,000 FINANCED, BASED ON 50 DOWN ON APPROVED CREDIT THROUGH TMCC.

1.9% APR FOR 48 MONTHS ON APPROVED CREDIT

1.9% APR FOR 48 MONTHS AT \$21.65 PER MONTH PER \$1,000 FINANCED, BASED ON 50 DOWN ON APPROVED CREDIT THROUGH TMCC.

2.9% APR FOR 60 MONTHS ON APPROVED CREDIT

2.9% APR FOR 60 MONTHS AT \$17.92 PER MONTH PER \$1,000 FINANCED, BASED ON 50 DOWN ON APPROVED CREDIT THROUGH TMCC. FACTORY REBATES IN LIEU OF FINANCING.



'04 MATRIX



'03 HIGHLANDER

0% APR FOR 36 MONTHS ON APPROVED CREDIT

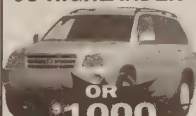
0% APR FOR 36 MONTHS AT \$27.78 PER MONTH PER \$1,000 FINANCED, BASED ON 50 DOWN ON APPROVED CREDIT THROUGH TMCC.

1.9% APR FOR 48 MONTHS ON APPROVED CREDIT

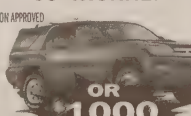
1.9% APR FOR 48 MONTHS AT \$21.65 PER MONTH PER \$1,000 FINANCED, BASED ON 50 DOWN ON APPROVED CREDIT THROUGH TMCC.

2.9% APR FOR 60 MONTHS ON APPROVED CREDIT

2.9% APR FOR 60 MONTHS AT \$17.92 PER MONTH PER \$1,000 FINANCED, BASED ON 50 DOWN ON APPROVED CREDIT THROUGH TMCC. FACTORY REBATES IN LIEU OF FINANCING.



'03 4RUNNER



'04 CAMRY

0% APR FOR 36 MONTHS ON APPROVED CREDIT

0% APR FOR 36 MONTHS AT \$27.78 PER MONTH PER \$1,000 FINANCED, BASED ON 50 DOWN ON APPROVED CREDIT THROUGH TMCC.

1.9% APR FOR 60 MONTHS ON APPROVED CREDIT

1.9% APR FOR 60 MONTHS AT \$17.48 PER MONTH PER \$1,000 FINANCED, BASED ON 50 DOWN ON APPROVED CREDIT THROUGH TMCC. FACTORY REBATES IN LIEU OF FINANCING.

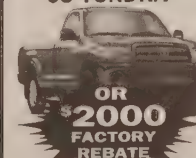


OR \$750 FACTORY REBATE

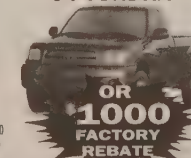
'03 TUNDRA

0% APR FOR 60 MONTHS ON APPROVED CREDIT

0% APR FOR 60 MONTHS AT \$16.67 PER MONTH PER \$1,000 FINANCED, BASED ON 50 DOWN ON APPROVED CREDIT THROUGH TMCC. FACTORY REBATES IN LIEU OF FINANCING. EXCLUDES TUNDRA DOUBLE CAB



'04 TUNDRA



USED '03 CAMRY LE SDN.



PREVIOUS DAILY RENTALS

SALE PRICE

\$14,688

2 AT THIS PRICE

NEW '04 COROLLA CE SDN.

- AUTOMATIC
- AIR CONDITIONER
- AM/FM WITH CD
- & MORE!



MSRP \$14,972
FFTOYOTA DISCOUNT \$2,184
SALE PRICE

\$12,788

2 AT THIS PRICE

VIN#26904
VIN#28357

NISSAN

SHIFT.

2545 Auto Mall Parkway - Fairfield
1-888-899-7535

NEW 2004 NISSAN PATHFINDER ARMADA, & TITAN NOW IN STOCK & AVAILABLE FOR SALE!

OVER 500 NEW & USED VEHICLES TO CHOOSE FROM

USED '03 NISSAN ALTIMA 2.5S WEEKEND SPECIAL



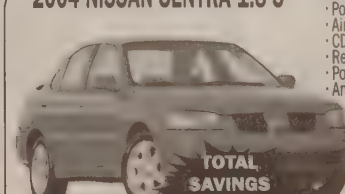
- 175 HP Engine
- 4 Wheel Disc Brakes
- CD Audio System
- Air Conditioning
- Cruise Control

SALE PRICE

\$15,888

4 AT THIS PRICE

2004 NISSAN SENTRA 1.8 S



- Automatic
- Power Windows & Locks
- Air Conditioning
- CD Player
- Remote Keyless Entry
- Power Outside Mirrors
- And More!

NISSAN OF FAIRFIELD

SALE PRICE

\$10,988

4 AT THIS PRICE

2004 NISSAN FRONTIER XE KING CAB



- Power Windows & Locks
- Air Conditioning
- Tilt Wheel
- Privacy Glass
- Cruise Control
- Sliding Rear Window
- CD
- & Much More

\$13,488

2 AT THIS PRICE

STK#V40019 VIN#181497
STK#V40020 VIN#181497

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If you're not sure you're getting the best deal, call Ron Barber at 1-800-496-0481.

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4325-4335 Sonoma Blvd. Vallejo 1-800-496-0481

SUZUKI
Make the smart move.™

BRAND NEW
7 YEAR/100,000 MILE WARRANTY
VOTED "BEST WARRANTY IN AMERICA"
WARRANTY AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW AT DEALERSHIP.

2004 SUZUKI AERIO

STK#4030 ID#251941
STK#4032 ID#253190
STK#4019 ID#252187



MSRP \$16,299
BARBER DISCOUNT -\$3,311
SALE PRICE

\$12,988
3 AT THIS PRICE

2004 SUZUKI XL-7 LX 7 PASSENGER

Climate Control
Front & Rear Air
AM/FM CD player
Roof rack
Privacy Glass
Two-tone Paint



MSRP \$22,499
BARBER DISCOUNT -\$3,504
SALE PRICE

\$18,995
5 AT THIS PRICE

2003 SUZUKI GRAND VITARA 4X4

STK#5308 ID#107363
STK#5309 ID#107399
STK#5303 ID#107384



Automatic
Air Conditioning
ABS System
Alloy Wheels

MSRP \$22,394
BARBER DISCOUNT -\$3,906
SALE PRICE \$18,488
FACTORY REBATE -\$2,500
NET COST TO YOU

\$15,988
3 AT THIS PRICE

BARBER SUZUKI

PRICES PLUS GOVERNMENT FEES AND TAXES. ANY FINANCE CHARGES. ANY DEALER DOCUMENT PREPARATION CHARGE. AND ANY EMISSION TESTING CHARGE. FINANCING SUBJECT TO CREDIT APPROVAL. OFFER EXPIRES 24 HOURS AFTER PUBLICATION.

DODGE CHRYSLER

4325 Sonoma Blvd - Vallejo 1-800-496-0481

THE BEST VALUES IN AMERICA... JUST GOT BETTER!!

2004 DODGE CARAVAN SXT

BARBER DISCOUNT \$3,000
LION KING REBATE \$500
HOLIDAY BONUS CASH \$3,000
FACTORY REBATE -\$2,500
NET SAVINGS TO YOU

\$7,000 OFF MSRP
ALL IN STOCK AT THIS PRICE



2004 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE

BARBER DISCOUNT \$3,000
HOLIDAY BONUS CASH \$500
FACTORY REBATE -\$2,500
NET SAVINGS TO YOU

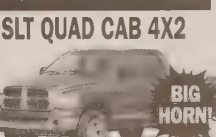
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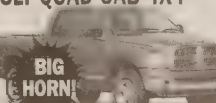
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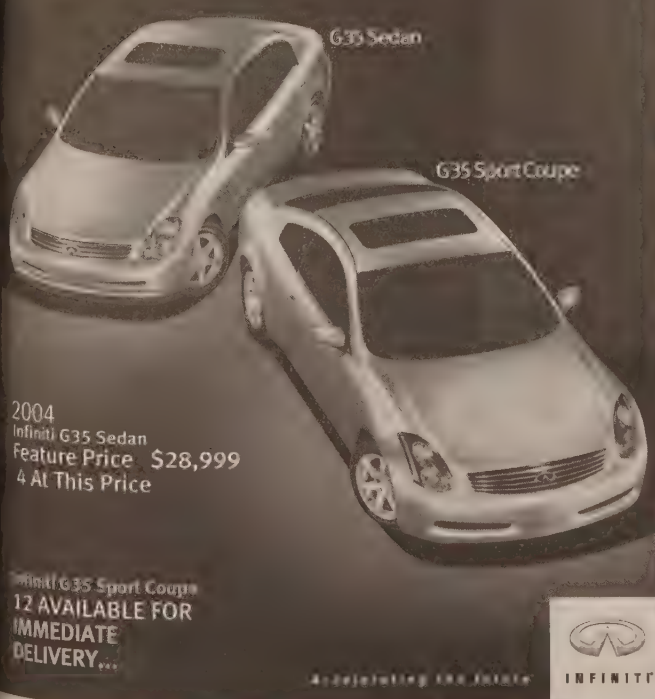
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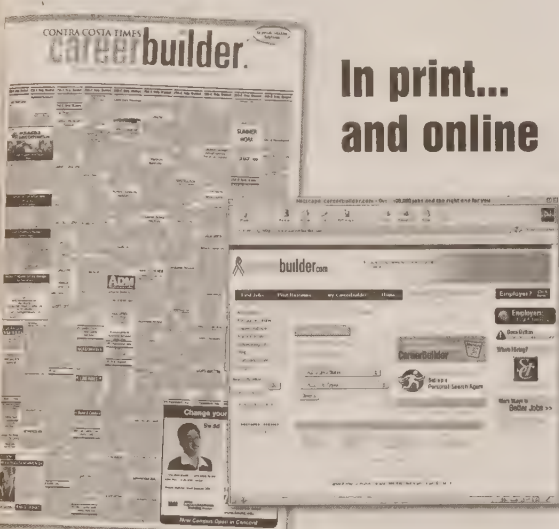
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What are

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Auto Plus

Friday, August 24, 2001

Section D

Advertising supplement to The Montclair, The Piedmont, The Berkeley Voice, The Journal, The Alameda Journal

Classic Classics: MGB still going strong [D3]

DAVE VAN SICKLE

Most gas-saving gadgets fall short of touted claims

When gasoline prices begin to rise to do motorists' concerns about fuel economy. Not so coincidentally, a jump in gas prices is often accompanied by vigorous advertising of gas-saving gadgets, hyped by claims that they will save as much as 10 percent on fuel costs.

For what? The answer, it turns out, is not always clear. Some of the gadgets, such as aerodynamic roof racks, are designed to reduce drag, but they can also add weight and wind resistance, which can offset any gains.

Other gadgets, such as "fuel saving" devices that claim to optimize engine performance, are often little more than expensive placebo. In fact, many of these devices can actually harm the engine or reduce its lifespan.

So, what's the deal? The answer is simple: Most of these gadgets are designed to take advantage of the public's fear of rising gas prices. They are often sold at a premium, and the savings they promise are rarely realized.

Instead of wasting money on these gadgets, motorists would be better off focusing on proven ways to improve fuel economy, such as maintaining proper tire pressure, getting regular oil changes, and driving more efficiently.



Acura RSX makes shifting much more enjoyable

TOM KEANE

In spite of summer's heat, the hot wife 2002 Acura RSX Type-S puts fun back into driving. This sports coupe with its buzzy engine makes time pass quickly. Multiple improvements were added to the RSX, including a new 180-hp engine, a six-speed manual transmission, and a sport-tuned suspension.

The RSX Type-S has a 200-hp VTEC engine, which is not powerful, but it's responsive. The six-speed manual transmission is a joy to use, and the sport-tuned suspension makes the car feel like a race car.

comes with only a six-speed manual transmission. This close-ratio transmission is exceptionally easy to shift, putting the driver in control of the car's speed.

The RSX isn't a fast, powerful car, but it's a fun car. It's a car that makes driving enjoyable, and that's a rare quality in today's market.

Also, the engine is designed to be responsive, and the transmission is designed to be easy to use. This makes the RSX a car that's fun to drive, and that's what counts.

As long as you're driving, you're going to have to deal with the heat. But the RSX is a car that's designed to be fun to drive, and that's what counts. It's a car that makes driving enjoyable, and that's a rare quality in today's market.

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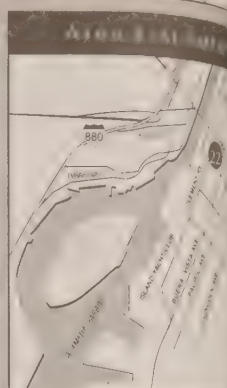
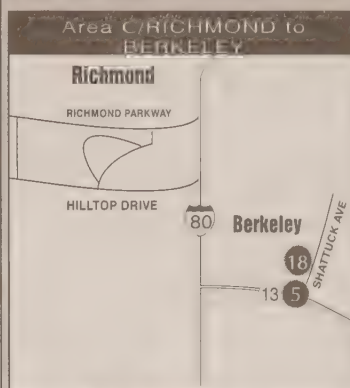
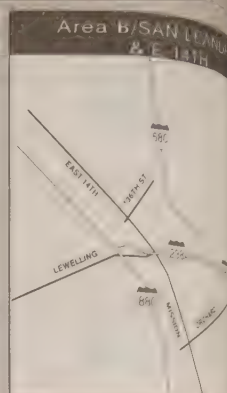
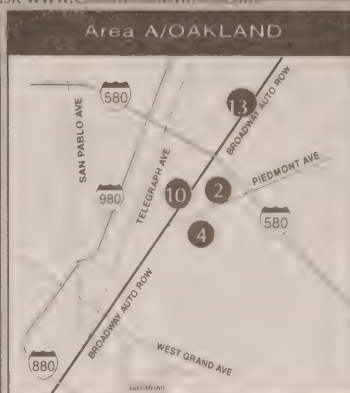
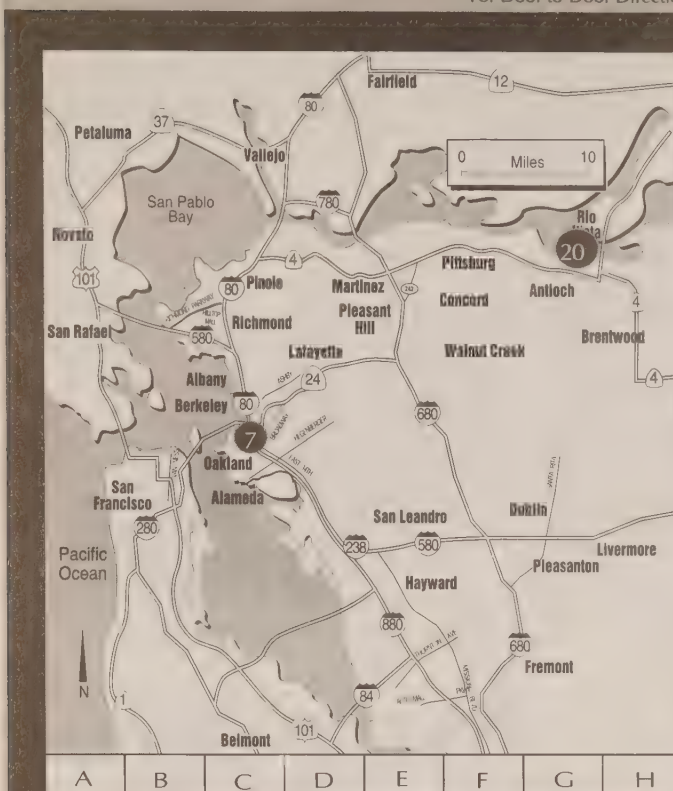
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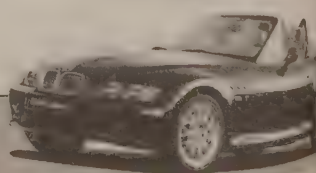
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Celebration

FROM PAGE 1

The snow (hopefully) and cold (inevitably) and promise of great fun (a promise generally kept) have been bringing people to Quebec's joyous winter bash — with timeouts for wars and great and lesser Depressions — for more than a century. Its latest, most successful run marks its 50th year Jan. 30-Feb. 15, 2004, and here's what it is:

Night parades. That musicians can play brass instruments in that weather without their lips sticking to the metal is one of life's miracles. Ice sculptures. If you think what you've seen at weddings and cruise buffets are ice sculptures, wait till you see these.

Snow sculptures. Sculptors from several countries (including, at least one year, Mexico) create masterworks on-site. Some should never be allowed to melt.

Bonhomme. The event's snowman symbol. He's everywhere. He's cute.

Caribou. Not the stewed mammal. This is a liquid that gets people stoned.

Plus canoe races, toboggan slides, a soapbox derby, ice fishing for kids, ice skating for everybody and a jole de vivre that happens when people free themselves of winter's shackles.

For these few days, Europe can't compete. Well, OK, it can — the Alps help — but Quebec does a real nice job with what it has.

And the next morning, those

doughnuts never tasted better.

Russia: The first signs of spring

BY ALEX RODRIGUEZ

The Russian media try to pitch the country's yearly pre-Lent festival called Maslentsa as Russia's answer to Brazil's Carnival.

It's a tough sell. Carnival has the glorious pounding of samba music and costumed processions that yelp into the wee hours of the night. Maslentsa's got pancakes and bare-chested men beating each other senseless as a test of strength.

Held in early March, Maslentsa has its roots in ancient pagan rites practiced more than 1,500 years ago to mark the end of winter. When Russia became Christian at the end of the 1st Century, Maslentsa evolved into a Russian Orthodox festival marking the beginning of Lent.

The festival's focal point is the "blini" or Russian buckwheat pancake, meant to symbolize the rising sun of spring. Stacks of them are consumed during the week-long festival, usually with caviar or salmon.

The festival's oddest element is "Stenka Na Stenku," which translates into "Wall on Wall." Teams of 50 shirtless men meet on a snowfield and pummel each other with their fists. Legend has it that Ivan the Terrible enjoyed this part of Maslentsa the most.

On the last day, after a week of vodka, gluttony and fistfights, weary Russians turn to each other and ask forgiveness.

You can't get more Russian than that.

Moscow bureau chief Alex Ro-

driguez eagerly embraces any festival that celebrates the end of Russia's seemingly endless winter.

New York: Dropping the ball

BY STEVENSON SWANSON

Sure, New Yorkers can be obnoxiously insistent that their city is the biggest, greatest, most exciting center of civilized life ever conjured by human hands in the whole history of the universe, period.

But when it comes to New Year's Eve, they have a point. The year can't end until the star-bright crystal ball atop One Times Square drops at midnight to the deafening cheers of several hundred thousand revelers.

This annual public party, which will be held for the 100th time this year, began on New Year's Eve 1904, when New York Times publisher Adolph Ochs staged a fireworks display to celebrate his newspaper's new office building at the intersection of Broadway and Seventh Avenue. The dropping ball made its first appearance three years later. Dick Clark followed shortly thereafter.

For those who balk at the thought of standing in the cold for hours, watching the festivities from a Times Square hotel holds undeniable appeal.

But there's no substitute for being at ground level and watching two tons of multi-colored confetti flutter through the winter air. Thousands of police officers — totting Geiger counters and gas masks in a bow to terrorism threats — keep rowdiness to a minimum, but even so, the lighthearted crowd seems

surprisingly well-behaved. Maybe that's because they're almost all tourists. The natives stay home and watch the festivities on TV.

National correspondent Stevenson Swanson, based in New York, welcomed 2000 in Times Square with several hundred thousand of his closest friends.

China/Harbin: Soles on Ice

BY MICHAEL A. LEV

When you live in the bone-cracking cold of China's frozen north, there is no use denying it. This is the spirit behind the light-hearted Harbin International Ice and Snow Festival, which would fare well in the category "best use of ice cubes," perhaps finishing just behind the margarita.

Each January, with the temperature below zero, Harbin festoons the streets of its Russian-influenced downtown with ornate ice carvings of castles, ships and charging horses, while the main fairgrounds become home to enormous ice Buddhas, pyramids, sliding ponds, and any other vision an artist with a chisel and a good pair of gloves can dream up. Most of the carvings are accented with colored lights, which give off an ethereal glow as they shimmer in the cold of the Manchurian evening.

With temperatures dipping below minus-30 degrees after the weak sun sets, I tried to make my discomfort educational by investigating how the natives keep warm. The shoe-store clerk recommended a pair of hearty Siberian cloth shoes with double-thick soles. But I thought the true secret was about to be revealed by a shish-kebab

seller who paused thoughtfully to consider the issue, exhaling a billowing cloud of frozen breath.

"We wear layers of clothes," he offered. "And we don't stay outside for more than an hour at a time."

Anti-climatic, I thought. Then I discovered how to keep warm with a credit card. Use it to buy a mink coat from Central Shopping City department store, which displays hundreds of minks at one-third the price of American furs. And not just for women. Harbin's men also wear mink, adding extra flash to the annual winter show.

China/National: The Spirit of Mou-Tai

BY MICHAEL A. LEV

For me, Chinese New Year summons up patriotic feelings as an American, for it was in support of U.S.-China friendship that I felt compelled to accept the many, many shot-glass toasts offered to me by the exuberant guests at an afternoon New Year's party in Beijing.

The drink was Mou-Tai, a pricey, powerful sorghum-based white spirit that tends to appear at special gatherings like New Year's. The other staple of the holiday — this one far gentler to the consumer — is homemade dumplings, called jiaoza.

Forget everything you think you know about dumplings, kreplach or any other stuffed noodle with the density of a bowling ball. Jiaoza are delicate and light enough to eat by the dozen and often come stuffed with a delectable mix of pork and chive as addictive as your favorite potato chip.

It is perhaps for the jiaoza alone that tens of millions of Chi-

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THIS MEAL-IN-A-POT GUMBO, made from leftover turkey, makes for a quick dinner and quick cleanup.

Gumbo is a delicious and creative destination for leftover holiday turkey

BY CAROL MIGHTON HADDIX
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Leftover turkey usually presents no problem in the days after Thanksgiving. After all, some people even prefer it leftover. There's the classic turkey soup, the hot sandwiches, the nibbling off the carcass when no one is looking.

But after a bit, even those treats begin to tire. So here comes a gumbo to the rescue, stocked with good things like vegetables and that New Orleans standby, andouille sausage. It's a meal-in-a-pot that needs little more than good bread to help clean the bowl and a light, refreshing yogurt and berry parfait for dessert.

Menu: Quick turkey and sausage gumbo with red rice, French bread and vanilla yogurt and raspberry parfaits.

Tips: Get your veggies already chopped at the salad bar or produce

aisle. White rice cooks quicker than red or brown rice, but has less flavor. For variety, try a rice blend.

QUICK TURKEY SAUSAGE GUMBO WITH RED RICE

1/4 cup each: vegetable oil, flour
3 ribs celery, chopped
1 onion, chopped
1 each, chopped: red bell pepper, green bell pepper
1 teaspoon dried thyme leaves
1/4 teaspoon smoked Spanish paprika, hot Hungarian paprika or ground red pepper
1 package (10 ounces) andouille or kielbasa sausage, sliced 1/4-inch thick
2 cans (14 1/2 ounces each) chicken broth
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 cups chopped cooked turkey
2 cups raw red or other rice, cooked to package directions

1. Heat oil in large, heavy skillet or Dutch oven over high heat; add flour. Reduce heat to medium. Cook flour, stirring, until brown, about 5 minutes, being careful not to burn it.

2. Add celery, onion and bell peppers. Cook, stirring, until softened, about 2 minutes. Add thyme and paprika; cook 1 minute. Add sausage; cook, stirring, 1 minute. Stir in broth. Heat to a boil; reduce heat to simmer. Simmer 15 minutes. Stir in turkey. Serve over cooked rice in wide bowls.

Preparation time: 20 minutes, cooking time: 25 minutes, makes 6 servings.

ARA

Kids always seem to be asking their parents for money. Whether it's an increase in their allowance, money to buy the latest tech toy or a cool outfit for school, one thing's for sure — they want it. And the older they get, the more they want.

By the time kids reach their teens, they're spending an average of \$101 per week of their own and their parents' money in 2003, according to a study by Teenage Research Unlimited. And the National Retail Federation reports that the average household spent \$451 on back-to-school shopping this year.

With youth spending on the rise, when is it appropriate for kids to start earning money?

"Parents should start teaching the concepts as early as possible," says Suzanne Olson, editor and spokesperson for iHateFinancialPlanning.com, a Web site that uses humor to get serious about financial planning. "Home is the perfect training ground for kids to learn how to respect money, stick to a budget and make choices."

To help your children get started on the road to financial responsibility, iHateFinancialPlanning.com offers the following tips:

Play shopkeeper. There are some simple games you can play with kids as young as 3 and 4 that will both entertain them and build a basic understanding of money. Use play money, and let your little shopkeeper place the sales revenues in a toy bank.

On trips to stores, talk to your young children about the basics of shopping for sales and using coupons. As soon as children show an interest in counting, you can use real coins and help them start learning how to pay for things we buy.

Settle the allowance question. Kids usually start to get a little more sophisticated about money between the ages of 9 and 12, when their desire to acquire kicks in. When it's real, not play, money they want, it's time to decide whether an allowance is appropriate.

Some parents believe in giving an allowance for household chores, while others think kids should do chores as part of family living. If an allowance is in your child's future, set your expectations. Decide if you'll permit your child to earn extra money above and beyond a weekly amount. And if you're unsure how much allowance to give your child, iHateFinancialPlanning.com has a suggested monthly allowance chart for children of various ages.

Ways to earn extra money. Be

creative. Many of the ways to earn extra money that were around when we were kids may not exist any more. Sure, some of the old standards still apply: selling lemonade, mowing lawns, raking leaves, shoveling snow and painting fences. But there are other ways to earn a few extra bucks.

Your child could serve as a computer tutor for another child — or even an adult or grandparent. Busy families in your neighborhood might welcome a plant- or pet-sitter while they're out of town. Other options include selling handmade greeting cards, cultivating a garden and selling homegrown vegetables, or helping out at a garage sale.

Jobs for teens. When kids are old enough to join the workforce in earnest, they may need a little help getting started. "With the job market so tough for teens this year, their first lesson could be that it's hard work to land a job," Olson says. "That's a valuable lesson for anyone, and it's best learned sooner than later."

Here are some things parents can do to help their teenager get started or continue in a fiscally responsible direction (translation: get a job).

Find out what jobs are out there. Word of mouth is one of the best ways of finding a job. Suggest talking to friends, relatives, neighbors, teachers and counselors. Point out help wanted signs in store windows, and news bulletin boards at libraries, community centers and neighborhood businesses.

Determine interests. Encourage teens to apply for jobs that fit their skills and interests. School or public libraries offer a host of information and the kind of training they require. Many have easy-to-use computer programs that match skills with jobs. iHateFinancialPlanning.com also has a "teens only" section of its Web site designed to help them learn how to earn and manage their money, from determining what kind of job they want, to tips for successful interviews.

Help them balance their time. This is about earning a little extra money. It's not about sacrificing every ounce of their free time to obtain what they want. Help your child set up a schedule that allows adequate time for school, for work and for play. Sometimes kids over-commit themselves because they simply haven't yet learned the art of juggling their time.

Lead by example. There's a lot more to work than showing up. As a parent, model the work behaviors

you'd like your child to have. Stress being on time and being courteous to others. Come home from a job, think about what you're sending "home" and a better work attitude to illustrate how to handle day-to-day tasks in stride.

Track performance. An employer tracks your performance on the job, set up a record of your child's steady performance, whether it's allowance, a part-time job or the perfect time to do positive behaviors and child to continue them.

Consider a financial plan. Teaching your child financial responsibility isn't just about money. It's about making good choices. Olson says, "Consider an investment account for your child. Then offer to place a certain amount in it for every dollar not unlike some 401(k) plan. Not only encourage saving, but also reward it. That's often how savings — delayed gratification — is achieved."

For other tips on how to teach your child about money, visit iHateFinancialPlanning.com — Courtesy of iHateFinancialPlanning.com

KIDS ALWAYS SEEM to be asking their parents for money. And the older they get, the more they want.

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Cozy cabins hold nostalgic appeal for increasing numbers of baby boomers

BY GAILE ROBINSON

PHOTO BY ROBERT NEWSPAPERS

At any other time of the year, log cabins take on a special significance in winter. They are the epitome of coziness, comfort, and solitude. They have historical significance and contemporary cachet. They are relics of our past, and they represent a segment of the new-home market. Log-home construction is a \$3 billion-a-year industry, which has 6.5 percent of the custom-built housing market. Log-home business has never been stronger than it is now," says Kupferer, publisher of Home Publications, which puts out Home Living. Industry figures, loosely cobbling together by Kupferer and the National Association of Home Builders, suggest that about 100,000 log homes are built annually, bringing the total number of log homes in the United States to the half-million mark. Typical log-home owners, rather than left-over hippies too young to construct a geodesic dome, are married, with college degrees and family incomes over \$50,000. Imagine them in uniform: police officers, firefighters, military personnel, pilots and nurses. These are the folks that Build-System Magazine identifies as most likely log-home living professionals. Teachers, engineers, truckers are part of the lot, too. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Tom Cruise, Ted Turner and Jesse Ventura are all self-avowed log-home owners. So are England's Queen Elizabeth II and former Russian president Boris Yeltsin. Logs traverse social and geo-

graphic boundaries. In Japan, there are log homes over 1,000 years old. The log-building industry is even older in Scandinavia and Eastern Europe. Americans equate log dwellings with the Pilgrims and early settlements. The style was a logical choice in the timber-rich Northeast. Today, people choose log homes over more conventional construction for the beauty of the wood and the custom features that make each one unique. To own one is to spend about 15 percent more than for a house of comparable size built of bricks and mortar. All of that wood adds up. At the outset it may seem that the houses cost the same, but land costs are not figured into the log-home price tag, as they are in the purchase of an existing brick-and-mortar house. Often the log house is bought as a kit — the Lincoln Logs package, as it were — the logs, windows, doors, roof and such are trucked in to the site, but the foundation, electricity, plumbing, finish carpentry, tile work and painting are supplied by local tradesmen, adding more to the final cost. The deals are quite fluid. You can buy as much or as little of the contract work you want. Just be sure you know where all the parts are and who's paying for what before you begin construction. Some people can hide a lot of money in log construction. "People may spend a fortune on the home, but it doesn't look like they're logging their wealth," says Canadian-based Lloyd Beckedorf of Moose Mountain Log Homes. Someone who wouldn't feel at home in a \$5 million home would feel comfortable in a log home of the same price because the design is down-to-earth, he says. There are many multimillion-dollar log homes, but the 2,500-square-foot house, costing just shy of \$200,000, is the average. At Langford Construction in Burleson, Texas, office manager Connie Stogsdrill says costs are \$85 to \$95 a square foot. That's about 15 percent more than conventional construction. Quotes of \$85-\$120 a square foot are not uncommon. Some builders, who deal in deluxe hand-hewn logs of substantial size, have seen the price rise to \$200 a square foot, depending on the interior specifications. It seems that when people design their dream house, they tend to indulge in surfaces and fixtures. The cost of the logs can vary as well. Many of the logs used in log-home building come from Beckedorf's back yard, Canada. Especially popular is standing dead timber. These highly coveted logs are from trees that died standing, have dried out and are less expensive to truck across the north country, as they are fairly water-free and lighter in weight. Almost twice as many standing dead timber logs can be put on each truck than logs of green wood. Some logs that end up as Texas homes come from neighboring states and those in the Rocky Mountains. Texas trees "do not measure up to log-home building," says Glenn Holland, owner of Fort Worth-based Log Home Repair of Texas. Holland says log homes are not maintenance-free, and any homeowner who thinks they are is going to be vastly surprised, and anyone who tries to sell you

that feature is lying. "There is more upkeep on a log home," he says. "Nature can't tell the difference between a log lying on the forest floor and one that is part of a wall. You still have to protect the logs from natural elements, sun and rain, bacterial decay and bugs." Wrap-around porches help protect the logs, says Stogsdrill, who works for David Langford, a builder and owner of Real Log Homes. He has done them as small as 700 square feet and as large as 10,000. The large, open concept with living room, dining room and kitchen as one room is quite popular with log-home owners, says Stogsdrill. This design style is easy to achieve with log construction, as logs can hold up a roof without the need of interior support pillars and load-bearing walls. Most log homes have a great room with a loft. "People who buy log homes like the rustic appeal; they want to surround themselves in wood," says Cresson, Texas-based Christopher Cornwall, North Texas distributor for Kuhns Brothers Log Homes. Log-home owners are passionate about their dwellings, Kupferer said. A Building Systems Magazine survey showed that 63 percent of log home owners considered no other type of dwelling. Many of those are child-free couples building their last home. "They want to be intimately involved in every detail as it is being built," he says. "Campers, we call them," says James P. Jenkins, owner of Nostalgic Homes of Brenham, Texas. "They have more time to oversee the process," and they virtually

finished, you will know whether a log home is right for you. "The Log Home Plan Book," by Cindy Thiede Gibbs-Smith Publisher (\$24.95). Thiede's book pairs photos of log homes and their floor plans. She has several titles on the subject to her credit and offers some sound advice. "The Owner-Built Log House," Living in Harmony With Your Environment," by B. Allan Mackie; Firefly Books Ltd. (\$24.95). Be careful, Mackie is such a smooth writer that he carries you away, and for several hours you will honestly believe you can build a log home. Remember, he lived in a tent, in Canada, for two years while building his latest one. He's made of very tough stuff. On the Web: There are many Web sites devoted to log-home building. One of the best, as far as connecting you to builders, manufacturers and representatives in your area, is: <http://www.loghomeliving.com/>. Some of the largest log-home builders can be found at these sites: <http://www.hearthstonehomes.com/>, <http://www.honka.com/>, <http://www.lindal.com/>, <http://www.southlandloghome.com/>. Also try: <http://www.cedarhomes.com/>, <http://www.loghomes.com/>, <http://www.logassociation.org/>, <http://www.logcrafters.com/>, <http://www.mapleisland.com/>, <http://www.nevilog.com/>, <http://www.nwcustomloghomes.com/>, <http://www.oregonloghomes.com/>

camp out on the job site. These dedicated people are the tip of the log-homeowner iceberg, says Cornwall. With each passing year, as boomers edge toward retirement, there will be more and more of them. Right now there are not very many Texas-based log-home builders and dealers, but as the market expands, Cornwall knows more will come. He says the log home is the industry's best sales tool: "As more people see them, more people will buy them." Here are log-home-related magazines, plus books and Web sites. Log home magazines: Country's Best Log Homes, 800-219-1187 Log Home Living, 800-234-8496 Log Homes Illustrated, <http://www.loghomesmag.com/> Log Home Design Ideas, available on newsstands Recent books: "The Cabin," by Dale Mulfinger and Susan E. Davis; The Taunton Press (\$34.95). Probably the best, as far as contemporary design and thought and with an abundance of log home designs. "Log Cabins," by Janice Brewster; Friedman Fairfax Publishers (\$17.95). This book will speak to the romantic log-cabin fancier; it is full of beautiful photos of traditional log-cabin interiors. "Log Spirit," by Linda White; Gibbs-Smith Publisher (\$21.95). With the help of practical advice and lovely illustrative photographs, the author takes you on a journey of considerations. When you are

Scrapbookers traveling to spend a few days with fellow enthusiasts

BY CARRIE ALEXANDER

THE ORLANDO SENTINEL

ORLANDO, Fla. — Ten miles, even across the county, scrapbook aficionados are going the distance when it comes to seeing on their craft. Sue Quaine and Cindy Daniel, the "scrappers," as hobbyists are known, are among a group of about 70 people who recently traveled to Holiday Inn in Orlando for a nonstop scrapbooking and getaway. Daniel, it was a short trek to Orange City, Fla. Quaine, however, traveled to Orlando from Orange City, Mich. Scrapbooking, the creation of albums and memory books with photographs and decorative paper, is hot, hot, hot. A 2001 study found that more than 15 million households had at least one scrapbook. Now, weekend getaways adding fuel to the fire. Scrapbooking is the hottest hobby around right now, and it has become a billion-dollar industry, says Marianne Alvarez, founder of Gotta Crop in Lodi, Calif. "Crops" have become the meeting place of the new millennial, where women get together to work on their photo albums, share new ideas and bond while the same time preserving their precious family memories. Scrapbooking Getaways in Orange City, which organized the Orlando event, is just one of several companies in the United States that offer such gatherings. Enthusiasts can attend retreats in places as Newport Beach, Calif.; Long Beach, Calif.; Indianapolis; Atlanta; Pensacola, Fla.; and New Orleans. There are even scrapbooking retreats to Alaska, Hawaii and the Bahamas. Traveling scrappers pack their supplies in neatly organized suitcases, paper bags or tackle boxes, and hit the highway. But the vacations aren't about sightseeing. Participants spend most of their time in windowless conference rooms, their heads bowed over their work. They travel to scrapbooking events to get away from the distractions of the outside world and to visit attractions or immerse themselves in the culture of a new place. Quaine James, owner of Scrapbooking Getaways, says that weekend crops are about space, place. Whether the retreat is local or long distance, participants are there for the luxury of space and the companionship of like-minded hobbyists. "I've always wanted to go to something like this," says Quaine. "I found it on the Internet, and I'm bringing a ball. I just came for ideas from other people." One big appeal of the weekend is that scrappers don't have to do a work in progress to, say, the table for dinner or to help with homework. "Once you start, it's hard to stop," says Kim Bondarenko, a stroke Pines resident who

drove to Orlando with a couple of friends. "We stay to the very last minute." Scrapppers find camaraderie is a natural result of the weekends. When they met Friday evening, Quaine and Daniel were strangers. But by Saturday afternoon, the two scrapbooking devotees were sharing ideas, tools and supplies. For hours, they were perched across the table from one another, cutting patterned paper, coloring words with chalk and arranging decorative elements on album pages. Quaine hunched over the scrapbook page she was fashioning into a tribute to her daughter's homecoming dance. She cocked her head, trying to decide which elements will add appeal to her page design. "Do you want any of the script letters that I have?" Daniel asks. Quaine studied her page and asks, "Would that look good?" She decided it would. "You can just have this," Daniel says, handing her gold metallic paper. These are working vacations, but that doesn't mean all work and no play. Picture a cross between a kindergarten art class and a pajama party. Guests dress casually — pajamas and slippers are encouraged — and tuck themselves into tables where they cut, paste and color for hours at a time. Scrapppers proudly lift their pages into the air for others to ooh and aah over. "It's addictive," says Daniel, a veteran of scrapbooking gatherings. The weekends usually have quite a few trimmings. During the Orlando gathering, vendors were on hand to sell new products such as stickers and patterned paper, and classes in stamping and other art forms were offered. Participants had access to a computer for typesetting and scanning, and a massage therapist who would rub aching shoulders and necks. "Massages are real popular," Scrapbooking Getaways' James says. "I guess from scrapbooking all day and all night, their shoulders get all cramped." James says the conference room is open 24 hours at most getaways, and some scrapppers work through the night. "They're usually pretty dedicated scrapbookers." Adding to the fun are page-design competitions and drawings for prizes such as photo albums and tickets to future getaway weekends. Competition can be tough — today's memory books are works of art adorned with designer background papers (think Laura Ashley) and plenty of ornamentation, including ribbons, buttons, charms and stickers. Pages feature headlines and lengthy photo captions. Albums may even sport framed poems or letters to future generations. James says the trips — which typically cost between \$200 and \$500 and include lodging and a reserved seat — are popular because scrapppers feel as if they've

accomplished something by the time they pack up their supplies to go home. They've completed a project that the whole family can enjoy, and they've forged friendships. "Everyone's so helpful, and I've learned a lot," Quaine says, "I'll definitely be back here next year." It's likely she will. Quaine was the drawing for a future cropping weekend, sans accommodations. She's already discussing sharing a room with Daniel, her new friend and scrapbooking partner. "Scrapbooking is the hottest hobby around right now, and it has become a billion-dollar industry. 'Crops' have become the quilting bees of the new millennium." — Marianne Alvarez, co-founder of Gotta Crop in Lodi, Calif.

Tips for eating healthy this winter

It's easy to eat right during the winter months with an abundance of fresh produce available from a wide variety of sources. But as winter rolls around, those juicy ears of corn are just a memory. That doesn't mean, however, that you drop your healthy eating habits with the dropping temperatures. You still need to get your five servings a day of fruits and vegetables. Make an effort to include fruits and vegetables at every meal. Since your options are more limited during the winter months, now's the time to get creative by trying new recipes as well as sampling produce you haven't eaten before. Winter brings a bumper crop of root vegetables like turnips, rutabagas and parsnips; squash; brussels sprouts; and more. Apples and pumpkins are the foundation of a variety of comforting, homey desserts. Here are some tips to help you chase away the winter chill by adding the flavors and healthy benefits of winter produce. As always, the key to buying the best produce is to know what you're looking for. No matter what the season, look for fruits and vegetables with good color, stay away from produce with bruising, blemishes, soft spots or shriveling. For additional help in selecting produce, especially items you haven't tried before, visit www.about-produce.com. This easy-to-use Web site features an "A to Z" guide to pro-

duce that includes useful information on the peak season for any given item, nutrition information and selection tips. You can also "ask the experts" if you have a question that isn't answered on the site. Best of all, the site includes hundreds of recipes that show you how to put the produce to work on the dinner table. From asparagus to zucchini and everything in between, you'll find it all here. Here are two delicious recipes sure to warm you up this winter: PESTO MINISTRONE This full-flavored soup is also full of healthy vegetables. 2 cups cauliflower (2 small heads), coarsely chopped 1-1/2 cups zucchini (1-2 medium), chopped 3 cans (14.5 ounces) chicken broth, reduced sodium 1 16-ounce can tomatoes, diced, drained 1 cup elbow macaroni or small pasta shells 3 cups kidney beans or black-eyed peas, drained and rinsed (1 cup dry makes 3 cups cooked) or 2 cans (15 ounces each) 1 cup carrot (1 medium), sliced 1 cup onion (1 medium), chopped 2 tablespoons olive oil (for pesto) 2 garlic cloves (for pesto) 1 cup basil leaves, fresh, loosely packed OR (for pesto) 1 cup Italian parsley plus 1 teaspoon dried basil leaves (for pesto)

1 tablespoon water In a 5 to 6 quart saucepan bring to boil 1/2 cup water, tomatoes, cauliflower, onion and carrots; reduce heat and simmer covered 10 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Add zucchini, beans, broth and pasta. Return to a boil, reduce heat and simmer uncovered 10 minutes. Meanwhile put all pesto ingredients in food processor or blender and process until very finely chopped. Just before serving, remove soup from heat and stir in pesto. Makes 8 servings. GOLDEN APPLE OATMEAL Start your day off right with a steaming bowl of this hearty (and heart healthy) oatmeal. 1/2 cup Golden Delicious apples, diced 1/3 cup apple juice 1/3 cup water 1/8 teaspoon salt Dash of cinnamon Dash of nutmeg 1/3 cup quick-cooking rolled oats, uncooked Directions Combine apples, apple juice, water and seasoning; bring to a boil. Stir in rolled oats; cook 1 minute. Cover and let stand several minutes before serving. Makes a 1-cup serving. For more recipes, as well as nutrition and buying information for all types of produce, visit www.about-produce.com. — Courtesy of ARA Content



PESTO MINISTRONE: This full-flavored soup is also full of healthy vegetables.

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Ceiling fans move the air in cool style

Want to stir things up around the house this summer? Add a ceiling fan. It's true stirring up the air will make you feel immediately cooler. But ceiling fans do more than just bring about breezes. Designed with the latest home decor trends in mind, these overhead fans move in fashionable circles.

"Fans today are design pieces as well as functional appliances," says Patrick Wilson, vice president, sales and marketing for Minka Aire, a ceiling fan manufacturer based in Corona, Calif.

John Pearson agrees. "Customers are interested in using fans as design elements," says the vice president for marketing for Casablanca Fan Company, a Pomona, Calif.-based fan manufacturer.

High-tech, contemporary designs have become popular in the last few years. As a result, brushed nickel, steel, and sleek pewter finishes get thumbs-up approval from trendsetters. Earth tones like rustic copper and bronze are also hot-sellers. Ditto painted finishes and washes.

"People are more inquisitive than ever about ceiling fan possibilities," says Troy Lee, general merchandising manager for Progressive Lighting, Inc., a retailer in Kennesaw, Ga. "People want something attractive on their ceiling and they are concerned about matching the fan's design to their decor."

Ceiling fans work well in any home, thanks to a variety of design options.

Ornate filigree blade holders offer a graceful, turn-of-the-century ambience. Brushed steel housing and light-colored maple blades offer the ultimate in contemporary styling. Classic polished brass finishes work well in more traditional homes.

"Today's fan customer seems less interested in price and more concerned about matching their ceiling fan to their home décor. I think it's great to offer a product that makes a home more comfortable and adds beauty at the same time," said Cliff Crimmins, vice president of marketing, Craftmade, a fan manufacturer from Correll, Texas.

The soaring ceilings and expansive great rooms in today's newer homes have increased demand for larger fans with bigger blades and longer down rods. Manufacturers comply, creating phenomenal fans that move massive quantities of air and work well in 30-foot tall spaces and lofts.

Fan design isn't the only thing

High-tech, contemporary designs have become popular in the last few years. As a result, brushed nickel, steel, and sleek pewter finishes get thumbs-up approval from trendsetters.

that's expanded. Places to put ceiling fans have also increased. These fans bring a breeze to almost any home space, inside or out — from kitchens, bathrooms and dining areas to porches, patios and gazebos.

"We are seeing more fans being used on patios than ever before," says Kathy Held, manager, buyer and vice president of South Dade Lighting, a 10,000-square-foot lighting showroom in Miami. "People are using their porches and patios as extra rooms. They spend money on landscaping and landscape lighting, then add the fans so they can sit out and enjoy it all."

With more than 14 million ceiling fans sold annually, most do double-duty, lighting a room as well as moving air. "Our research indicates that a majority of ceiling fans are sold with a light fixture because consumers are usually replacing a light in their room," says Mark Jeffrey, general manager for Emerson Electric Company Air Comfort Products Division, a St. Louis manufacturer.

Little wonder. Ceiling fans today offer a wide variety of lighting options that add interest to any home. Mission-inspired fans look great with mica or stained-glass light fixtures. Art Deco styles boast white frosted fixtures for a clean look. Glass shades etched with flowers add a romantic touch to a little girl's room.

"Ceiling fans have become an important part of the lighting scheme in homes today," says Held, who often works with customers to combine recessed and decorative lighting with ceiling fans.

Some fans feature built-in lighting. Others work with light kits, allowing dwellers to mix-and-match light fixtures and fitters to create a customized look.

When choosing lights for your ceiling fan, be sure they meet the room's needs. Workspaces like kitchens and home offices demand bright light. Bedrooms and dining rooms, however, require more subdued illumination. Dimmer switches also allow you to adjust the light on a fan to fit your mood.

To create more relaxed lighting, consider the latest introduction — ceiling fans with indirect uplighting. "The uplight bounces ambient light off the ceiling to create a comfortable mood," says Jeffrey. Emerson debuted uplighting last year, combining it with more traditional downlighting in several models this season.

Like garage doors and television sets, some ceiling fans utilize remote controls to not only adjust lights, but operate the fan itself. "Everything else has a remote, why not a ceiling fan?" says Casablanca's Pearson.

Tall ceilings and aging Baby Boomers make remotes a good idea. "The older population and couch potatoes don't want to jump up and down to pull a chain on a fan," says Minka Aire's Wilson.

In addition to turning fans on and off, some remotes automatically adjust the fan based on changes in the room's temperature, turn lights on and off when you're not home and dim lights as you leave the room.

Ceiling fan prices are as diverse as the styles. Experts agree, however, that quality counts. "Customers are more educated than ever about the different grades of fans," says Allan Margolin, president of M&M Lighting, Inc., a Houston retail establishment. "Fans can cost up to \$600 for a quality, deluxe model at a lighting showroom."

Customers seem to be turning to the lighting showrooms and trading up to better merchandise, replacing ceiling fans that wobble, make noise and don't move air as well as top quality fans.

In fact, independent research from the American Lighting Association (ALA) indicates that 70 percent of consumers do not mind paying more for a higher quality product. The ALA points out that consumers will have the ceiling fan for many years so quality and style should be key factors in the buying decision.

ALA-member retail showrooms offer expert advice on ceiling fans with the latest innovations in technology as well as style.

Consumers can visit the ALA Web



CEILING FANS DO MORE than just bring about breezes. Designed with the latest home decor trends in mind, these overhead fans move in fashionable circles.

site at www.americanlightingassoc.com for the name of the nearest lighting/fan showroom or call the association's hotline at 800-BRIGHT IDEAS (800-274-4484).

Ceiling fans and energy efficiency

Ceiling fans don't actually lower the temperature of a room like an air conditioner. But by spinning the air, they do make the room feel cooler.

"Ceiling fans augment air conditioning by moving air and creating a wind chill effect," says Patrick Wilson, vice president, marketing for Minka Aire, a ceiling fan manufacturer in Corona, Calif. "If your air conditioner is set at 72, the fan will make it feel like 68 degrees."

Best of all, ceiling fans use only about as much energy as a 100-watt light bulb.

Studies show that by setting ceiling fans to spin in a counter-clockwise pattern, you can save as much as 40 percent off summer cooling bills — without swe-

tering. Simply set the thermostat a few degrees higher and flip on the fan.

In the winter, ceiling fans move warm air back to the center of the room, pushing it down from the ceiling. "With tall ceilings, it can be 10 to 15 degrees hotter up there than on the floor," says Wilson. "Ceiling fans can push that warm air back down to floor level."

Studies also reveal that ceiling fans can help homeowners save as much as 10 percent on their heating bills. Switch the direction of the blades to spin clockwise and turn on the fan.

Ten tips for buying a ceiling fan

1. Finding the fan that works best for your home is a breeze, when you follow the expert's advice.

2. Bigger rooms need bigger fans. Choose a 50- to 56-inch fan for rooms up to 225 square feet and larger. Pick up a 42- to 44-inch fan for rooms up to 144 square feet. Rooms up to 64 square feet can use a 32-inch fan.

3. Ceiling height is a factor when choosing a fan. Blades should be at least seven feet above the floor. A blade height of eight feet is optimum.

4. Look for a motor that's quiet. "The heart of the motor," says Mark Wilson, general manager for Emerson Electric Company Air Comfort Products Division in St. Louis, "is it but it is the real workhorse."

5. The amount of air a ceiling fan depends on the blade, or pitch, of its blades. A pitch of 14 degrees is optimum for air movement.

6. Consider your home's decor. "If you want the fan to be your home's secret, choose colors and detail that complement the room," says Casablanca's John Pearson. "If you want to 'disappear,' choose the color of the ceiling."

7. Look for light fixtures that match your fan. "Ceiling fans are not just wiring brought to the room; most fans replace existing wiring is usually already in place."

8. When adding a bathroom, look for a fan designed and UL-listed for wet locations. Want one for a fan that's wet locations.

9. A ceiling fan is as much as the company that makes it," says Kathy Held, manager for Emerson Electric Company Air Comfort Products Division in St. Louis. "Look for a fan that's made in the U.S."

10. Buy the best you can afford. "People are willing to spend more money to achieve better performance, better performance look that complements their decor," says Held.

— Courtesy of ARA Content

How to stock your toolbox and be prepared for basic home repairs

Whether you are a first-time homeowner or have owned a home for years, unless you can afford to have every maintenance chore taken care of by a handyman or professional tradesman, there's probably a long list of to-do tasks just waiting to be tackled.

Your degree of success in completing projects fast enough to still enjoy a round of golf or the kids' soccer games can depend on your skills, the project knowledge you have and what's in your toolbox.

"Having the right tools for home maintenance and repair makes it so much easier to complete the work," says Lou Manfredini, Ace Hardware's Helpful Hardware Man and home improvement expert. "But you don't have to go overboard. You can tackle most simple repairs with a collection of tools that will fit into a 5-gallon bucket."

The following are the 15 of the essential tools Manfredini recommends you keep in that toolbox tool kit to get you through most basic home repair projects:

- A good screwdriver: One will do if it's the kind onto which you can fit a number of different heads, including the basics of a Phillips and slotted.
- An adjustable wrench, which will eliminate the need for an entire set of socket wrenches.
- Three types of pliers: ordinary, needle-nose and wire cutters.
- A set of Allen wrenches, used to tighten bolts that have six-sided holes on top.
- A level, which will help with everything from hanging a picture or curtain rods to shelving. Select between a 2-foot standard level or a 6-inch "torpedo" style.
- A retractable tape measure. One that is 25-feet long should be sufficient.

- A stud finder, which will help locate behind-the-wall or ceiling structural boards.
- A good hammer. Select a 16-ounce claw hammer with a good-fitting grip.
- A small handsaw with a 12-inch blade that fits into a sheath for safety.
- A plunger to clear clogged drains.
- A chisel, which can help chip out wood to reset a door hinge or adjust a sticking latch.

- A utility knife with a retractable, replaceable blade.
- An assortment of screws and nails.
- A cordless drill. This is the only power tool you'll need unless you become serious about home renovation. Look for one that drills holes and can be fitted with screw-driver attachments. The cordless feature allows you to use the drill anywhere without dragging along an electrical cord.

Stick-it stuff: A bottle of carpenter's glue and rolls of electrical, masking and duct tape. In a recent poll of Ace Hardware retailers on the one item people should keep on hand for emergency repairs, the overwhelming answer was duct tape, cited by more than half (52 percent) of the retailers.

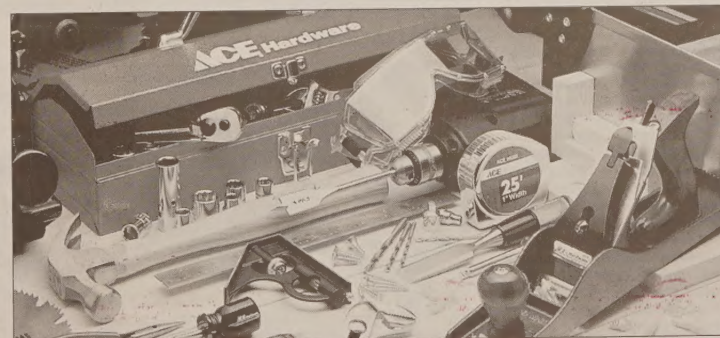
Manfredini says you can assemble these tools inexpensively, but that you should not skimp on

quality. "The only other thing you'll need is the 5-gallon bucket in which to carry the tools, or, better still, a sturdy tool box," Manfredini said. "My favorite is one that doubles as a step stool."

For more advice on home improvement, visit your local Ace Hardware store or log on to www.acehardware.com and click on the Answers@Ace icon.

Answers@Ace is an online resource with information for do-it-yourselfers about hardware and home improvement projects. The Everyday Projects section has pictures and detailed, step-by-step instructions for this and many more home improvement projects.

— Courtesy of ARA Content



THERE ARE 15 ESSENTIAL TOOLS that Lou Manfredini, Ace Hardware's Helpful Hardware Man, recommends you keep in the toolbox to get you through most basic home repair projects.

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Please recycle this newspaper.

backyard playground without spending a fortune

ARA
The next time your kids come from a friend's house and you find a backyard playground, you'll be surprised to find an answer they're not expecting. Say yes. You'll be doing a big favor.

Research has found that playgrounds are essential not only to a child's physical strength, but also to their cognitive reasoning and problem-solving skills, and encourage them to use their imaginations and creativity.

Having heard about the research, Daniel and Bethany of Hadley, Mass., recently decided to invest in a play set for their sons Joshua, Matthew and Noah. "We thought it would be a good idea," says Daniel.

It's actually more of a Mother's present to their wife — to give kids something to do. "When they knew they wanted a play set, one that would last a long time, but they found out how much it would cost, the Jacques' were flummoxed. Depending on the features they come with, wooden sets typically cost between \$1,000 and \$3,000. "While doing research online, we came across a company that advertised high-quality play sets for under \$1,000, and that's who we decided to go with," says Jacques. The company they found, Detailed Play Systems, has been around since 1998. Founder and CEO Karl Jensen, is a dad who found himself in a similar predicament just five years ago. When his boys were four and three, he started looking for a backyard play set, and the prices were so high, he decided to build one himself. He started shopping

around for supplies, Jensen realized the task wouldn't be as easy as he first thought. He had to go to different places to find the swings, slide, monkey bars, hardware and lumber. "No one was selling materials that met my standards as a kit, and that gave me an idea."

Jensen decided to go into the playground building business after realizing he had stumbled onto a niche that needed to be filled.

"Our business plan is designed to meet the needs of the cost-conscious consumer who wants to save approximately 50 percent off the cost of comparable prefabricated wooden forts and swing sets, without sacrificing the safety, size, quality, or features of their children's backyard playground," says Jensen.

"The key to the savings is low overhead and the willingness of our customers to put in some elbow grease of their own."

Detailed Play Systems provides its customers with the Detailed Plans needed to build their playground, the hardware, swings and slide. The wood is not included, but each kit contains a Lumber Purchase Guide that shows exactly what wood needs to be purchased to build each configuration, giving parents the added benefit of being able to choose the type of wood, and to hand-select each piece if desired for quality control.

Kits from Detailed Play Systems range from \$169 for a basic Jungle Fort Builder Kit to \$900 and up for the works — a dual fort plus swing set combination.

The company's most popular kit, the Jungle Fort Swing Set Kit, sells for \$499. It features a large 6 foot by 6 foot fort with sandbox beneath complete with inclined step ladder, gangplank ramp, a slide and attached 3-position

swing set.

Included in the price are the Detailed Plans, all galvanized hardware, and the playground equipment components needed. For the Jungle Fort Swing Set, these include a ten-foot Wave slide, belt swings, trapeze bar, and handgrips for safety.

The kits are fully customizable, a multitude of playground configurations can be built, and the sets are modular so they can be added to over time.

Accessories such as periscopes, telescopes, steering wheels, sandbox covers, and specialty swings — full bucket or flat swings — can be added on to kits or purchased individually and used to upgrade an existing backyard playground.

"The idea here is to help our customers provide quality playgrounds for their kids that won't break the bank. We are able to keep costs down because our customers don't have to pay for the labor overhead, machinery, or wood processing," says Jensen.

"Shipping the wood alone can easily add \$500 to the cost."

If you decide to build a playground yourself, Jensen says you can count on the project taking about a weekend to complete. He estimates about 8 hours for the wood processing, which includes cutting the wood to size and drilling the holes for the bolts, and another 8 hours for assembly.

"Depending on how large or small your chosen playground configuration is, your tool setup, and how much help you have, it may take more or less time," he says. Only basic skills — measuring, cutting straight lines, and drilling holes — are required.

"Many of our customers — having had no prior wood working experience — have built their own playground for about half the cost thanks to our Detailed Plans that

make it easy."

"It took us a couple of weekends to get it all done," says Jacques. "And it was a family project that was rewarding for us to accomplish together. My father-in-law and brother-in-law helped."

Once you have your completed project, you may want to add such safety measures as mulch made from recycled rubber, landscape timbers made from recycled plastic, bumper pads, and nonskid strips for places where kids need a better grip.

All of these kits and add-ons are available direct from Detailed Play Systems.

The company is based in New Jersey, but does most of its business online and through catalogs. To order a catalog, call 800-398-7565 or log on to www.detailed-play.com. Shipping is available in the 48 contiguous United States.

— Courtesy of ARA Content

Common childcare myths

ARA
Most new parents get a lot of advice from family and friends, before and after the baby is born. Although it is well-intended, in some cases, it may not be completely accurate.

There are a number of common misconceptions that are often passed along to new parents. Here are some of the more widespread childcare myths:

■ Some people believe that taking too many flash pictures of a baby can damage his eyes. Fortunately this isn't true.

■ It's not true that vinyl toys could expose children to harmful levels of substances. The Consumer Products Safety Commission recently found "no demonstrated health risk" from vinyl toys for children.

■ Despite what you might have heard, you cannot spoil a baby by tending to her in the middle of the night, or by taking her out of the

crib for feeding. The truth is you cannot spoil a baby, and in fact, you are providing some security and comfort when you answer their midnight cries.

■ Another myth is that you can't use plastics in the microwave oven. If the manufacturer says it's okay to microwave the plastic, then go ahead and do so. But, be careful about the temperature of the food. There are hot spots in microwaved food and you don't want to burn the inside of your baby's mouth.

Parents have to be very careful where they get their information. The Internet can be a great source, but you have to be skeptical. There are a lot of good resources on the Web, but there is also a lot of misinformation. The best advice is to get a good pediatrician who can help you sort through all the "advice" about your children's care that comes your way.

— Courtesy of ARA Content

Dinner tonight: Grilled corn bread salad

BY DONNA PIERCE

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

I first made this main-dish salad to make use of leftover corn bread. I was inspired by panzanella, a salad created by Italian peasants to make use of stale bread. Now, I will sometimes make corn bread a day in advance for the single purpose of serving this salad.

Menu

Corn bread salad
Fresh pineapple slices
Brownies
Sparkling water

Tips

Use prepared Italian vinaigrette. Buy tomatoes, bacon, sliced onion and cucumber at a super-

market salad bar.

GRILLED CORN BREAD SALAD

6 cups roughly crumbled day-old corn bread
3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 teaspoon grainy mustard, such as Creole
1/3 cup olive oil
1 can (15 ounces) black beans, rinsed, drained
4 slices crisply cooked bacon, crumbled
2 ripe tomatoes, diced
2 ripe avocados, peeled, seeded, diced
1 each, thinly sliced: small red onion, cucumber
1/4 cup chopped cilantro

1 teaspoon salt

Freshly ground pepper

1. Heat oven to 400 degrees. Place crumbled corn bread on greased baking sheet; bake until crunchy, about 7 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, whisk together vinegar and mustard. Whisk in olive oil; set aside. Place corn bread in large bowl. Add black beans, bacon, tomatoes, avocados, onion, cucumber and cilantro; toss to combine.

Season with salt and pepper to taste. Pour reserved dressing over salad ingredients. Toss to completely coat. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

Preparation time: 15 minutes, cooking time: 7 minutes, setting time: 5 minutes, makes 6 servings.



THIS CORN BREAD SALAD can serve as an entree with its hearty combination of vegetables, beans and bacon.

RESEARCH HAS FOUND that playgrounds are essential not only to a child's physical strength, but also to their cognitive reasoning and problem-solving skills, and encourage them to use their imaginations and creativity.

Winter is the time to give your skin extra tender loving care — here are some tips

BY LISA LIDDANE

THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Cold temperatures outdoors and dry, heated air indoors can dry your skin parched.

Your scalp and body may be itchy, your chin and nose may be irritated. Your lips may be cracked. Your hands and feet may develop painful cracks.

Here, some advice from board-certified dermatologists Dr. Kristin Kelly, associate clinical professor of dermatology at the University of California, Irvine, and Susan Goodlerner, spokeswoman for the American Academy of Dermatology.

Wash with a mild facial cleanser. Lukewarm, not hot, water. Blot dry. Rub dry — and use a moisturizing cream.

Scale down use of cleansers and moisturizers with exfoliating ingredients such as acids or anti-aging components if they are making your skin dry.

Remember that even if your skin is typically oily, some parts of your face may be dry during the winter.

Use a moisturizer lightly in the areas and be liberal with it in the spots.

Use a sunscreen with a minimum SPF of 15 during the day. Your good facial moisturizers have SPF in sunscreen.

Use a waterproof sunscreen

with a minimum SPF of 30 if you are participating in outdoor sports such as skiing, snowboarding and snowshoeing.

Look for UVA and UV-B protection. Look for at least one of the following ingredients: zinc oxide, titanium dioxide, avobenzone.

Reapply after several hours.

Body

Keep showers and baths short. Use warm, not hot, water, even if hot water feels better.

Remember that antibacterial soaps can sometimes be drying to the skin.

Use soaps, bath oils and shower gels with moisturizing qualities.

Rinse thoroughly and blot dry. Apply body cream immediately to seal in moisture.

Scalp

Wash your hair with warm, not hot, water.

To treat dandruff, wash hair most days with a mild shampoo.

Use an anti-dandruff shampoo two to three times a week. These shampoos contain an active ingredient such as selenium sulfide, coal tar, zinc pyrithione or ketoconazole.

If one brand doesn't work, try another.

Leave shampoo on your scalp for the recommended time listed on the instructions for best results. Rinse thoroughly.

Hands

Choose a lotion or cream that won't easily wash off when you wash your hands.

Use lotion or cream immediately after washing hands with soap and water to seal in moisture.

For extremely dry hands, heavier creams and ointments may be more effective.

Lips

Don't chew on or lick your lips. This will cause them to become dry.

Use a lip moisturizer or lip balm with SPF 15 or petroleum jelly. Reapply throughout the day and night.

Remember that cold sores are contagious — they're caused by the herpes simplex virus.

Cold sores disappear on their own in about a week.

Some over-the-counter topical ointments may provide temporary relief but if you want tougher treat-

ment, get a prescription for acyclovir ointment (Zovirax).

Basic skin care

At Drug/supermarket/discount stores:

- Almay
- Neutrogena
- Aveeno
- Cetaphil
- Eucerin
- Oil of Olay

At select department stores:

Clinique

At dermatologists' and plastic surgeons' offices: La Roche-Posay

Myths about winter skin care:

Myth: Dandruff occurs mostly in the winter. Fact: Dandruff occurs throughout the year. Washing the hair and scalp with hot water can make the skin dry but does not cause dandruff.

Myth: You don't need to wear

sunscreen in the winter. Fact: Even when it's cloudy, you still need to protect your skin from UV damage.

Myth: Only pricey moisturizers have good quality. Fact: Some drugstore brands, such as Cetaphil, Neutrogena, Eucerin, Aveeno and Oil of Olay, can do a good job of cleansing and moisturizing the skin.

Myth: Soap is not good for the skin. Fact: It depends on the soap. Pure soap can be drying to the

skin. Choose one that's appropriate for the condition of your skin, whether it's dry, oily or a combination.

Myth: More is always better when moisturizing the face. Fact: Over-moisturizing areas that are irritated or have acne may worsen the situation.

Source: Dr. Kristen Kelly, associate professor of dermatology, University of California, Irvine.

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Treat your feet: An electric radiant floor is an affordable home luxury

ARA

Mountain climbers have an old saying: "Don't cheat your feet." A homeowner might consider this advice when building or remodeling a bathroom or kitchen floor.

For floors, homeowners know that ceramic, slate or marble tiles are attractive and durable alternatives to wood, carpet or vinyl. They want the beauty of tile floors, but their feet tell them they're cold.

While most people are comfortable with air temperatures of 65 to 75 degrees, they tend to feel uncomfortable if there's more than a 5-degree difference between the surface temperature (80 to 85 degrees) of the head and that of the feet. A bare foot gives an immediate indication as to the comfort level of any floor. For this reason alone, tile is often not the flooring of choice.

With a tiny amount of heat supplied by a human foot, carpet fibers warm almost instantaneously to "foot" temperature, about 83 degrees. A ceramic tile can't compete in this race: its mass needs a lot more heat for a longer amount of time. It would take approximately 30 minutes for a human foot to increase a 68-degree marble floor to foot temperature.

Radiant floor warming systems solve this problem — fast.

The most common radiant floor warming systems are either hydronic (circulating hot water in tubes in the floor) or electric (heating cables in the floor). Hydronic systems are more complicated, requiring pumps and valves and modulators and so on, and, as a result, are a lot more expensive to install than electric. Still, for whole house heating solutions, hydronics are a good choice. By contrast, electric systems are inexpensive enough for single room applications and simple enough for do-it-yourselfers.

Suitable for new construction or remodeling applications, electric floor warming systems include

a network of cables installed in the mortar just below the tiles. These cables gently warm the tiles, operating on ordinary house current. While using a professional electrician is advised for those not comfortable working on electrical installations, these systems are generally easy to install and will not compromise the integrity of the tile installation.

Designing a floor warming installation first requires a determination of the area to be warmed. Calculating the total square footage will require collecting information from the blueprints of the room or actually measuring the area itself. It should be noted that areas that are inaccessible or under vanities, cabinets, or plumbing fixtures should not be included — there's no need to heat floor area that won't be walked on.

When making the calculations it is advisable to design a layout that considers actual use and traffic patterns in the area to be warmed. Using care in measuring and calculating the area will help ensure that the proper cable is selected for the installation. Preformed mats can also be selected to simplify the installation, but these are usually only suitable for rectangular areas; odd shaped areas, such as "T"s or "L"s will often have cold spots if heated by mats.

Easy Heat's Warm Tiles cables are available as an off-the-shelf product in a growing number of distribution channels, including retail. Easy Heat also provides mats in stock and custom sizes. Thermostats are also available with setback features to ensure that the cables are only heating the floor when the floor is being used.

Floor heating thermostats differ from room heating thermostats in that they have a sensor that extends down into the floor to sense the actual floor temperature, and to control the cables accordingly, usually

at about 85 degrees. Today, floor warming thermostats are available with sophisticated programming features as well.

A complete system often can be installed using an electric drill and other ordinary hand tools. The installation process can be completed in three phases that will likely correspond with the construction or remodeling phases of your home or building.

Phase one — Electrical rough-in

During the electrical rough-in, the electrical box for the thermostat is installed, and the power supply cable pulled into it. Conduit holes are drilled into the wall plate (a two-by-four on the floor at the bottom of the wall) to enable the heating cable leads and thermostat sensor to be pulled into the electrical box.

Phase two — Install cables

For new construction, the cables are installed only after the drywall is finished and immediately prior to the tile installation. The cables are provided with plastic strapping that is stapled to the floor, and the heating cable is simply woven over the floor on the strapping. The leads of the cable and the thermostat sensor are routed through the conduit holes and up to the electrical box. A "scratch coat" of mortar (just enough to cover the cables) is then applied and allowed to dry, usually just a day. Then, the flooring can be completed in the usual manner.

Phase three — Thermostat and power connection

The last phase calls for the installation of the thermostat and connection to the power source.

For more information on electric radiant floor warming call 877-EASY-HEAT, or go to www.warmtiles.com. Warm Tiles is a registered trademark of Easy Heat Inc.

— Courtesy of ARA Content



FOR FLOORS, HOMEOWNERS KNOW that tile is an attractive and durable alternative to carpet or vinyl. They want the beauty of tile floors, but their feet tell them they're cold.

Children and remarriage

ARA

When Nancy Ellwanger told her five-year-old son Jeremy that she was going to marry David Scott, the youngster initially seemed pleased. After all, Jeremy had grown quite fond of David, who always found the time to play a game or talk about sports with the rambunctious kindergartner.

"But then Jeremy started asking a lot of strange questions," Nancy recalls. "He wanted to know what a stepdad is supposed to do. He was also troubled that I was going to change my last name. It was clear he was afraid things might be different after we got married."

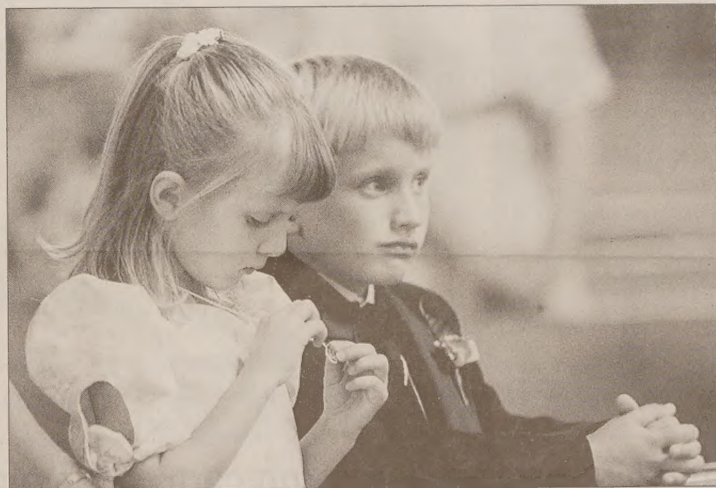
Nancy and David constantly assured Jeremy — as well as Nancy's 16-year-old daughter Nicole — that the children wouldn't become second class members of the family once the couple married. "We wanted the kids to understand that we were doing more than marrying each other; we were forming a family," David says.

The Duboisstown, Pa., couple was grappling with a problem experienced by most of the more than one million single parents who remarry in the U.S. each year. What can be done to ease the concerns of young children who feel, on a conscious or unconscious level, that their secure place in the family is threatened by the pending marriage of a parent?

After much research, Nancy found a simple and emotionally satisfying answer to the couple's dilemma in the form of a family-oriented wedding service that gives children a meaningful role in the wedding nuptials. This five-minute ceremony — known as the Family Medallion service — can easily be integrated into any religious or civil wedding ceremony.

It differs from the traditional wedding in only one respect: after the newlyweds exchange rings, their children join them for a special service focusing on the family nature of remarriage. Each child is given a gold or silver pendant or ring with three interlocking circles, a symbol that represents family love in much the same way the wedding ring signifies conjugal love.

The Scotts say they will never forget the moment during their wedding when Jeremy and Nicole were summoned to their sides to partic-



COURTESY OF ARA CONTENT

THE FAMILY MEDALLION SERVICE — a family-oriented wedding service — gives children a meaningful role in the wedding nuptials. This five-minute ceremony can easily be integrated into any religious or civil wedding ceremony.

ipate in the family wedding service. While the Mayor of Williamsport, a family friend who married the couple, recited the words of the ceremony — a pledge to love and care for all the children either spouse brings to the marriage — Nancy and David placed a Family Medallion around the necks of Jeremy and Nicole. Jeremy beamed with pride. Nicole, a typical teen not easily touched by the doings of adults, was overwhelmed with emotion. "Oh, mommy," she sobbed. "This is so wonderful."

The ceremony ended with Jeremy and Nicole enthusiastically hugging Nancy and David. "We were crying, and I remember hearing a lot of sniffing among our guests," Nancy adds. The attention the children received during the wedding carried through to the reception as guests fussed over the youngsters and examined their Family Medallions. Jeremy eagerly displayed his medal and explained to guests the family symbolism behind the three interlocking rings: "This one is mommy, this one is David, and this one is for me and Nicki."

Guests later told Nancy and David that they were awed by the power of the special service for Jeremy and Nicole. "People remarked that they had never witnessed anything so moving before," Nancy says.

"I guess that proves our family wedding was a success. Besides vowing to love each other, David and I wanted to stand before God and our guests and make a formal pledge of love to our children."

The family wedding concept is an idea whose time has come now that at least one-third of all new marriages in the U.S. involve divorced or widowed parents with children under 18 living in the home. "The number of marriages affecting children is even larger if you include parents who don't have custody of their kids," says Dr. Margorie Engel, president of the Stepfamily Association of America.

Despite the huge number of weddings involving parents with young children, virtually no religious or civil wedding ceremony acknowledges

the existence of youngsters. Nancy Scott learned this fact the hard way. "I was going crazy searching for something significant to do for my children during the wedding," she says. "I couldn't find a family-oriented wedding ceremony. And all the wedding products in stores and bridal magazines were geared toward first-time brides — not a 36-year-old woman with children."

This void also frustrated Dr. Roger Coleman, Chaplain of Pilgrim Chapel in Kansas City, Mo., who developed the Family Medallion and the family ceremony that goes with it. "I was disappointed that virtually every traditional wedding ceremony focused entirely on the bride and groom," Dr. Coleman explains. "A marriage with pre-existing children is a lot more than simply the union

of a man and a woman. It's a merging of two separate families. Every day of my ministry I see how divorce creates a sense of failure and hopelessness in people. The family ceremony is a sign of hope and an important step in rebuilding the devastation of the family."

Today, more than 15,000 couples a year — primarily in the United States, Canada and Europe — use the Family Medallion ceremony to help cement the bond between parents, stepparents and children. "It really works," says Williamsport Mayor Steven Cappelli, who officiated at the Ellwanger/Scott wedding. "It is a simple, beautiful ceremony that communicates, both symbolically and verbally, that the parent and stepparent are going to love their children as much as they love each other. The family ceremony is a great way to ease any apprehensions or misconceptions children might be harboring."

Family therapists and marriage counselors say there is a price to be paid when children feel pushed aside rather than embraced by the remarriage of a parent. "When kids aren't included in a meaningful way in the wedding, they feel disenfranchised," explains Father Christopher Vender, director of Catholic Ministries of California in Thousand Oaks, who has used the Family Medallion wedding service on several occasions. Father Vender knows all too well the pain children experience when they are merely observers at the wedding of a parent.

"When I was 11 years old, my mother remarried," he says. "I remember watching her and the second husband of my mother body acted like the new family about my mom and her. It had nothing to do with me left out and unloved."

"We clergy have to be aware, during and after the wedding, to help both adults and children with the changes that are involved in children being the vital role of children in a dysfunctional family, possibly even a second marriage."

Nancy and David say their decision to give Nicole a pivotal role in the wedding will permanently strengthen their family bond. "David just made the wedding coming a family event," Scott says. "The ceremony cemented my relationship with Jeremy and Nicki. It was a sound foundation for a long-term family relationship."

For young Jeremy, the value of his mom and stepdad's wedding is much appreciated. He points to the Family Medallion. "It means we're all in this together," he says.

Additional information on the Family Medallion service is available at www.familymedallion.com, or by calling 800-333-3333. Correspondence: ARA, Clergy Services Inc., Kansas City, MO 64111. — Courtesy of ARA Content

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